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A Description of Factors Influencing the Organizational Structure of the Alberta Section of the Canadian Figure Skating Association

by

Laura G. Campbell

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A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to undertake an exploratory and descriptive analysis of an amateur sport organization. The organization that was selected for this research was the Alberta Section of the Canadian Figure Skating Association. Three research questions addressed in this analysis were as follows:

1. What are the structural characteristics of the Alberta Section?
2. What is the nature of the Alberta Section's environment?
3. How are environmental factors related to structural characteristics of the Alberta Section?

The data were produced through interviews with 14 individuals who were, or had been, involved in the administration of the Alberta Section. Additional information was assembled by examining records and publications of the Alberta Section and by observing the organization as it functionned in the office and at executive and general meetings. A conceptual framework based on the literature was used to analyze the content of the collected data.

The findings of this study have shown that the Alberta Section divided its work into highly specialized tasks which were coordinated and controlled through an elaborate system of rules and procedures. The authority structure for decision making was highly centralized and resided mainly in the national and international governing bodies for figure skating.

Political and economic conditions in the organization's environment were shown to have influenced its historical development. The major source of external influence, however, was shown to be the other organizations with which the Alberta Section interacted. In particular, the structure of the Section's relationships with its parent organization and the provincial government were found to be highly formalized and standardized and involved sizeable resource investments.

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I. NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

A. Objective of the Study

Organizational theory provides certain useful guidelines for the analysis of amateur sport organizations. However, very little is actually known about the day to day operations of these organizations. This may be problematic in the application of theories, models and methodologies that have been primarily derived from the study of work organizations.[1] Before the development of hypotheses and the empirical testing of such hypotheses can occur, it is, as Zeigler (1973) suggested, important to build a descriptive base for understanding organizational phenomena in a sport setting.

Of further importance is the fact that amateur sport depends upon the efforts of volunteers, and while financial support from all levels of government has increased considerably in recent years, it is a potentially unstable and limited source of revenue. The importance of effective and efficient use of such limited human and financial resources cannot be overemphasized. However, it has been noted by Luschen (1981) that while "high performance and success is a consistent concern for sport itself" (p. 320), the performance or effectiveness of sport organizations is rarely studied. Hall (1982) stated that a basic reason for studying organizations is "to understand how and why organizations are effective or ineffective" (p. 267). Before this can be measured it is necessary to see the organization in its context, to understand the factors constraining it and thus, its potential effectiveness. To date, this has not been done in the study of amateur sport organizations.

Research on business and institutional organizations suggests that the interaction between an organization and its external environment can effect the structure and behavior of that organization. An important part of this external environment is other organizations. Sport in Canada is organized as a system in which numerous individuals, groups, associations and organizations interrelate. The complexity of the system and the potential implications this has for the overall effectiveness of sport delivery needs to be examined. Therefore, as a preliminary step, this study was designed to explore the concept of organizational environment as it relates to the structure of a specific amateur sport organization.

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[1] The term 'work organization' is used here to denote an organization whose major activity is related to the "business of making a living" (Sills, 1968, p. 363).

B. Conceptual Framework

During the past two decades, amateur sport in Canada has experienced unprecedented growth and expansion. The organization of sport has developed from the early sixties, when only a few national sport associations existed, to an increasingly sophisticated system that today includes more than fifty national sport governing bodies, ten times as many provincial associations and countless local sport clubs.

The administration of these organizations is, to a great extent, carried out by individuals who voluntarily commit themselves to providing sport opportunities. As in any organization, the basic task facing volunteer administrators is to achieve objectives through the efficient utilization of resources, Accomplishing this task is less straightforward. For example, organizational goals and objectives may be poorly defined or unrealistic and thus difficult to attain. Resources, especially economic ones, are often scarce. More important, however, is the fact that organizations do not exist in a vacuum. Instead, an organization exists within a larger context and is influenced and constrained by its variables. Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) proposed that:

> To understand the behavior of an organization, you must understand the context of that behavior. Organizations are inescapably bound up with the conditions of the environment. Indeed, it has been said that all organizations engage in activities which have as their logical conclusion adjustment to the environment.

This perspective is particularly relevant to understanding the administration of amateur sport organizations. The context, or environment, of organized sport has expanded significantly since the early 1970's. The extensive number of amateur sport organizations in Canada may be problematic to the structure and function of these organizations as they compete for limited financial and human resources. From a cooperative perspective, the greater number of sport groups may create problems with respect to communication and information flow. Other organizations directly interacting with the focal organization comprise what Hall (1982) termed the "specific environment". Teele (1979) suggested that organized sport must consider several interrelationships in its specific environment: "at the grass roots level the individual relates to a team, or club, the team or club usually relates to a Provincial association that relates to a National Governing Body that deals with the International Body. Some sports also have regional and league representation" (p. 5). Along with the plethora of sport associations and agencies, a number of "non-sport" organizations have become involved in sport delivery, most noteably the three levels of government (Broom and Baka, 1978). Corporate sponsorship of sport organizations and events has also risen in recent years. Sponsorship by some companies, particularly in the alcohol and tobacco industries, have prompted public debate on the ethics of such funding sources.

The analysis of interorganizational relationships has predominantly focused on two concepts: the exchange perspective and the dependency perspective (Schmidt and Kochan, 1977, p. 220). An exchange type of relationship is based on perceptions of mutual gains and benefits as a result of interaction, whereas dependency relations are based on asymmetrical gains and benefits favouring the more powerful party (Schmidt and Kochan, 1977). Hall, Clark, Giordano, Johnson and Van Roekel (1977) suggested that the exchange approach emphasizes voluntary bases of interaction, i.e., relationships that are entered into voluntarily. Two other bases of interaction they suggested are those governed by formal agreement and those which are legally mandated. Hall et al. (1977) found power to be operative in formalized relationships. Similarly, Aldrich (1976) found mandated interactions to be imbalanced benefitting one organization more than the other. This seems to imply that mandated interactions are more power dependent than an exchange type of relationship. Hall et al. (1977) concluded that the exchange theory was a useful basis of analysis "when the basis of interaction is voluntary. When the basis of interaction is a formal agreement or a legal mandate, exchange theory is not as useful" (p. 470). However, as Schmidt and Kochan (1977) concluded:

> Instead of focusing on dichotomous models of interorganizational relations, it is more fruitful to distinguish between patterns of relationships as determined by the relative

> strength of various dimensions of the relationship. (p. 231)

Marrett (1971) and Aldrich (1979) suggested four central dimensions for analyzing interorganizational relationships: formalization, intensity, reciprocity and standardization.

Another part of the environment distinguished by Hall (1982) is the "general environment". General environmental conditions are those that have potential relevance for the focal organization and include: 1) technological conditions; 2) legal conditions; 3) political conditions; 4) economic conditions; 5) demographic conditions; 6) ecological conditions; and 7) cultural conditions (Hall, 1982, pp. 227-233). The general environment is important to amateur sport organizations. For example, economic conditions may constrain the amount of competition possible because of the high costs related to travel and to the hosting of competitions. Political issues have affected international sport competitions several times in recent years; the 1980 Moscow Olympics and the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics are two examples of how unresolved political differences between the super-powers can result in boycotts of major sporting events. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the general external influences which may affect a particular sport organization, as well as examining the specific interrelationships in which that organization is involved.

Along with distinguishing constraints in the environment, it is necessary to examine how these relate to the structure and behavior of an organization. Organizational structure reflects patterns of relationships among positions in the organization. Miles (1980) defined organizational structure as follows:

> Those features of the organization that serve to control or distinguish its parts....Division and specialization refer to how the organization divides the work and assigns resources among work units....Coordination and control refer to how the working parts are articulated to achieve both general and specific organizational goals. (p. 18)

A series of studies by the Aston group (cf. Pugh, Hickson, Hinings and Turner, 1968) identified five primary dimensions of structure which can be used to profile different organizations: specialization, formalization, standardization, centralization and configuration. Their findings suggest that specialization, formalization and standardization combine under one basic dimension, "structuring of activity." The second basic dimension, "concentration of authority", was composed of centralization and autonomy from other organizations.

Research on structural variations suggests that the design of an organization depends in part upon the type of activity or technology involved (Burns and Stalker, 1961; Woodward, 1965) and the size of the organization (Pugh et al., 1968). It has also been shown to reflect conditions in an organization's environment. Pugh et al. (1968) found that an organization's dependence on other organizations related positively to centralization and loss of autonomy. Frisby (1982) has suggested a similar phenomenon occuring in Canadian amateur sport, in particular, that the increased dependence of sport on government funding has resulted in greater centralization of decision-making power and authority at the national level.

Thus, the design of an organization's structure must take into account both external and internal pressures. The extent to which an organization successfully adapts to the pressures or constraints placed on them could be a factor in the overall effectiveness of that organization. The importance of increased effectiveness in the administration of amateur sport organizations was highlighted by Campagnolo (1979) when she stated:

> Sound administration is particularly vital to our sports future for two reasons; first, because it has been at times lacking in some sports in Canada, and second, because it ensures that limited funds can achieve effective results. (p. 2)

C. The Unit of Analysis

The selection of an organization for this study was purposive and was based on criteria of feasibility and suitability. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) suggested that the the feasibility of a potential site or subject be considered by comparing properties of the units size, population, complexity and spatial scatter with resources of time, mobility, finances, skills and "whatever else it would take to do the job" (p. 19). An organization from within the province of Alberta was considered to be most accessible. Given that the organization would be voluntary in nature, the problem of spatial dispertion throughout the province was considered to be relatively similar for all amateur sports, that is, the members would be dispersed but to a great extent centred in major urban centres (Slack, 1981).

Some aspects of feasibility overlap with a second factor Schatzman and Strauss (1973) outlined, and that was suitability to the research requirements. Three specific requirements were used as criteria for selecting an organization. It was considered important that the sport organization be established within the province of Alberta. It was expected that age might somehow relate to the degree of establishment and similarly, to size of the organization. Thus, sport organizations that had a small membership or were less than ten years old, were not considered. Secondly, a preference for a sport open to both male and female participants was included as a criterion. Thirdly, it was considered favorable if the researcher had at least a base level of knowledge about the particular sport involved.

These criteria of suitability were applied to the provincial amateur sport governing bodies with the assistance of Trevor Slack, an individual who was well versed on the various organizations.[2] The organization selected was the Alberta Section of the Canadian Figure Skating Association (CFSA). The Alberta Section represented over 170 clubs and had been formed in 1969. While a greater number of females participate in the sport of figure skating, the activity is open equally to both genders as demonstrated by the equivalence of competitive classes. As well, the researcher was familiar with the technical terminology and basic organizational design of figure skating through prior involvement in the sport. The Alberta Section of the CFSA met the requirements and was therefore selected as the focal organization for this study.

The Alberta Section is an "organizational unit" of the national sports governing body whose jurisdiction includes all clubs in the Province of Alberta and the Northwest Territories that are registered with the national body. These clubs are considered "members" of the Alberta Section. Although the major function of the Alberta Section is to serve the clubs and their skating members, the clubs are not directly involved in the day to day operations of the Alberta

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[2] Dr. Slack, a Sessional Instructor in the Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies at the University of Alberta at the time of the study, had acted as a planning consultant for numerous sport organizations in Alberta.

Section. In this sense, the clubs are clients of the organization. Therefore, for the purpose of distinguishing organizational boundaries, the focal organization in this study was the administrative unit of the Alberta Section and included the members of the Executive Committee and the professional staff working in the Alberta Section office. The national body and the clubs were considered part of the specific environment of the Alberta Section.

D. The Research Questions

The research questions were formulated so as to be sufficiently broad to allow for the development of a largely descriptive base, but at the same time, delineated to a particular and potentially significant aspect of the organizational life of an amateur sport association. It was not, however, the purpose of the study to prove or disprove existing theory. Thus, a conceptual framework for the study was developed for the purpose of operationalizing the research questions and to provide focus in the analysis of research findings.

The major sources underpinning the conceptual framework were the work of the Aston group on organizational structure, the work of Hall regarding general environmental conditions and the work of Marrett and Aldrich on interorganizational relationships.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to undertake an exploratory and descriptive analysis of the Alberta Section of the CFSA. Based on the issues discussed in the previous section, the questions addressed in this analysis were as follows:

1. What are the structural characteristics of the Alberta Section?
2. What is the nature of the Alberta Section's environment?
3. How are environmental factors related to structural characteristics of the Alberta Section?

E. Assumption

It was assumed that there is an intuitive boundary between the Alberta Section and its external environment, and that this boundary is perceived by members and nonmembers. This assumption was based on the premise that "from the perspective of social process, institutions and social movements have no absolute spatial boundaries and no absolute beginnings or ends. Their parameters and properties are conceptual discoveries, and then, only for theoretical and practical working purposes, are they assigned boundaries" (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 2).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A. Introduction

While there is an extensive literature dealing with public and profit organizations, voluntary organizations and sport related organizations have been relatively neglected. This chapter summarizes the research of relevance to the present study and develops a conceptual framework for collecting and analyzing research data. The importance of this study lies in its essentially qualitative approach to understanding a particular aspect of organizational life that has been suggested to be problematic for Canadian amateur sport. The research is exploratory, therefore, certain parameters have been outlined to permit in-depth study of the phenomena chosen and to prevent superficial treatment of a broad range of variables.

Defining Sport Organizations

Before examining the literature on organizational theory, it is necessary to establish the meaning of the term "organization" as used to describe the various volunteer associations responsible for the delivery of amateur sport. Aldrich (1979) defined organizations as "goal-directed, boundary-maintaining, activity systems" (p. 4). These characteristics can be applied to the variety of associations, federations, councils, governing bodies and so forth, organized to provide amateur sport opportunities.

By "goal-directed", Aldrich (1979) was referring to the purposive nature of organizations. That is, organizations exist for some reason and much of the activity of the organization is directed towards that common purpose. Aldrich (1979) noted that some organizations have "multiple or contradictory goals, but a unity of purpose is still evident among various groups within the organization" (p. 4). Amateur sport groups have identifiable goals, many of which can be found in their constitutions and by-laws. Two pervasive goal themes in Canadian sport are the pursuit of excellence and participation of the masses.

"The establishment of an "organization" implies that a distinction has been made between members and non-members--some persons are admitted to participate in the organization, whereas others are excluded" (Aldrich, 1979, p. 4). Amateur sport associations usually levy membership fees and issue cards to identify membership status. Belonging to an association is often a mandatory prerequisite for participation in sport contests or competitions. (In this sense, the term "voluntary" may be questionned in reference to amateur sport.) In some sport organizations, an individual who joins at the club level is automatically accorded provincial and national membership status. An example of exclusion from membership would be those sport groups that bar professional athletes from participation in their organization.

The third characteristic used by Aldrich (1979) to define organizations was the concept of activity systems: "organizations possess a technology for accomplishing work, whether it's a technology for processing raw materials or people" (p. 5). The activities and technologies of sport are reflected by the division of labour among coaches, officials, players and administrators. Typically, sport organizations are "people processing" and their major activities revolve around the development of athletic skill through instruction and competition.

Much of the literature on amateur sport associations classifies them as "voluntary" organizations. Voluntary organizations are distinguishable from work organizations in that members are not "required to join in order to make a living" (Smith and Freedman, 1972, p. viii). There have been many attempts to develop a typology of voluntary organizations, one of the best known of which is Gordon and Babchuk's (1959) three-pronged typology which utilizes the organization's function or purpose as the criterion for categorization. The three categories are: a) instrumental, b) expressive, and c) instrumental-expressive (Gordon and Babchuk, 1959, p. 22). Instrumental organizations include those that "serve as social influence organizations designed to maintain or create some normative condition or change" (p. 25). Expressive organizations "are formed to express or satisfy the interests of their members" (p. 52). Organizations that manifest both instrumental and expressive functions, fall under the third category. Bratton (1970), in a study of local, provincial and national sport organizations, concluded that they should be categorized as instrumental-expressive.

> From the standpoint of the executive member, participation in their particular sport is valued because it is seen to contribute to different perceived needs of the individual participants. This contribution, then, serves an integrative function for the society as a whole by hopefully instilling certain value orientations in the young athletes that are deemed to be important by the executive members, and perhaps by many others in the society. At the same time, the association provides a setting in which executive members may engage in expressive activities, and in so doing, it serves an integrative function for the personality system of the executive member. (p.168)

The research that has been conducted on amateur sport organizations has been mainly descriptive, focusing on biographic and demographic characteristics of the volunteer administrators (c.f., Bratton, 1970; Beamish, 1978; Slack, 1981; Theberge, 1980). Luschen and Sage (1981) noted that "a substantial part of research in the sociology of sport deals with an analysis of sport as a closed social system or as interpersonal behavior itself" (p. 13). Few attempts have been made to analyze the structure and processes of amateur sport organizations. A recent exception is Slack's (1983) dissertation, which provides several insights into the functioning of a provincial sport association.

B. Organizational Structure

The first area addressed in this study, was the description of the organizational structure of the Alberta Section. Child (1972) defined organizational structure as "the formal allocation of work roles and the administrative mechanisms to control and integrate activities" (p. 2). These two functions are generally referred to as differentiation and integration: how the organization divides the work and how the working parts are coordinated and controlled (Miles, 1982).

In describing commonalities shared by sport and complex organizations, Yerles (1981) noted several manifestations of differentiation and integration:

> They namely share a division of tasks and roles, a structure of authority defining hierarchical lines and groups, a communication system delineating formal as well as informal interrelationships, and a set of objective criteria for performance evaluation. Sport organizations also share with complex organizations decision-making processes, set [sic] of policies and problems in policy-implementation. They finally have to cope

> with a major problem that any organization must face how to secure a minimum predictability in the behavior of others. (pp. 4-5)

To a great extent, the concepts and indices developed to examine organizational structure have been influenced by Weber's (1947) essay on bureaucracy. Many of the basic characteristics of organizations that Weber outlined are manifestations of various aspects of differentiation. The critical elements of the bureaucratic form include: 1) specialization of labour; 2) a defined hierarchy of authority and responsibility; 3) a formal set of rules and procedures; 4) impersonal interactions between officials and subordinates; and 5) selection and promotion on the basis of technical merit. These characteristics would be exhibited to a high degree in a highly bureaucratized organization. Although Weber viewed these characteristics as unitary, research indicates that there are different types of bureaucratic structures; that is, organizations can be bureaucratic in different ways (Mintzberg, 1983).

Several writers have suggested that amateur sport organizations are becoming increasingly bureaucratized in their structure (Page, 1973; Frey, 1978; Kidd, 1980). Page (1973) argued that:

> Sport clearly has not escaped the powerful thrust of bureaucracy to use the sociological concept that refers to the formalized, hierarchical, rule laden, and efficiency seeking type of organization the principle prototypes of which are big government, modern business enterprise and military establishment. The social revolution of sport, viewed in historical perspective, has been in large part the transition from recreation of elites to its bureaucratization--or in simple terms, from player-controlled "games" to the management controlled "big time". (p. 32)

In his study of a provincial sport association, Slack (1983) found several manifestations of bureaucracy to exist to varying degrees. Specifically, Slack (1983) found evidence of "a hierarchy of offices; the specification of the functions of the offices; an emphasis on professional qualifications; a career structure; a disciplinary system, i.e., a set of rules and regulations; appointment on the basis of a contract; a money salary; and the official's post being his/her sole occupation" (pp. 311-312). Although Slack was studying a voluntary organization, the last three manifestations became relevant when professional staff were hired. The introduction of professional administrators in amateur sport organizations is a relatively recent phenomenon, but one that is occurring with greater frequency.

Dimensions of Organizational Structure

A series of studies by the Aston group (cf. Pugh et al., 1968) suggested that five primary dimensions may be used to profile organizational structure. The five dimensions are described as follows:

1) Specialization: the division of labour within the organization.

3) Formalization: the extent to which rules, procedures, instructions and communications are written down.

2) Standardization: the extent to which procedures are governed by regulations.

4) Centralization: the locus of authority to make decisions affecting the organization.

5) Configuration: the shape of the role structure.

Based on studies of work organizations operating in and around Birmingham England, the Aston group found that the three dimensions of specialization, formalization and standardization combined under one basic factor, "structuring of activity." The second basic factor, "concentration of authority", was composed of centralization and lack of autonomy. (Configuration variables were weighted on the third and fourth factors, and were less important to the overall results.) The major conclusion drawn from the Aston studies was that increased size of organizations was correlated with increased "structuring of activities" and decreased "concentration of authority." Thus, organizational growth was accompanied by increases in specialization, formalization and standardization, and concomitant lowering of the locus of decision making authority or decentralization.

Tracing the development of the Alberta Section of the Canadian Amateur Swimming Association, Slack (1983) noted the effects of increasing size on the structure of that organization:

> As it grew the CASA(AS) started to develop its first bureaucratic characteristic in that a simple division of labour was created. As further growth took place the charasmatic authority structure on which the organization was founded would start to become routinized. Evidence of this trend was present not only in the division of labour that occurred, but in the creation of basic rules and regulations to control the affair [sic] of the organization, and in the increasing number of organizations with which the CASA(AS) interrelated. (p. 202)

Greenwood and Hinings (1976) distinguished vertical specialization as differentiation on the basis of authority, while horizontal specialization refers to differentiation on the basis of workflow. A measure of horizontal specialization would be the number of different units within a level of the organization. The number of different levels would reflect the extent to which the organization was vertically differentiated. The larger the number of horizontal and vertical divisions, the greater the degree of structural complexity.

Slack (1983) found evidence of horizontal specialization based on functional activities such as programming and planning. As well, the organization was vertically specialized with the Board of Directors at the highest level of authority.

Another aspect of specialization considered by Hage (1965) was specialized training or professionalization. He suggested that the "greater the number of occupations and the longer the period of training required, the more complex the organization" (Hage, 1965, p. 294). Slack (1983) found that "as the division of labour within CASA(AS) became more specialized, i.e., more committees started to appear to handle the increased number of tasks the organization faced, so the emphasis on professional qualifications increased" (p. 219). Business experience became a prerequisite for involvement in the administrative component of the organization, while certification programs for officials and coaches were developed to meet demands for increased standards in these two areas. An interesting consequence of the enhanced specialization was noted by Slack (1983), who concluded that: "this phenomenon has had the effect of increasing the efficiency of the organization but it has also limited those who are able to become involved" (p. 221). This may be problematic for an organization which depends on volunteered participation for so much of its operation.

The second and third dimensions included in "structuring of activity" are formalization and standardization. Essentially these are coordination and control mechanisms. As the number of activities and tasks in an organization increases, there is a greater need for integrative mechanisms. Thus, with increased specialization it is expected that there will be increased formalization and standardization. The initial step involved in measuring these two dimensions is identification of procedures in an organization. A procedure is an event that occurs regularly and is recognized or sanctioned by the organization (Pugh and Hickson, 1976). The degree to which a procedure is standardized is a function of the extent to which rules or definitions cover all circumstances and apply invariabley (Pugh and Hickson, 1976). Four general types of procedures are: decision-seeking, decision-making, information conveying, and implementation procedures. There are three categories of formalization: role definition, information passing and role performance. Job descriptions, manuals of procedures and terms of reference are all examples of role definition. Memos and house journals are examples of information passing. A record of role performance kept by most sport organizations is competition results.

Slack (1983) described the processes of standardization and formalization in a provincial sport association as follows:

> As the organization has grown so, too, have the number of these rules increased and become more complex. This is evidenced by the fact that now the organization's constitution and by-laws are nearly 30 pages long and standing orders are in the region of 100 pages. This does not include the rules necessary to run a swim meet. These also are extensive and have grown in number and complexity as swimming has become more technical. (pp. 227-228)

The degree to which rules are enforced should also be considered in the examination of formalization processes (Hage and Aiken, 1967).

"Concentration of authority" included centralization and lack of autonomy. One method for determining centralization is to ascertain "the last person whose assent must be obtained before legitimate action is taken--even if others have subsequently to confirm the decision" (Pugh and Hickson, 1976, p. 51). A second aspect of centralization is the degree of autonomy as indicated by the number of decisions referred to other organizations such as the parent organization. If most decisions are made by the upper eschelons or by the parent organization, the organization is centralized.

The kind of decision being made is an important distinction. Decisions regarding scheduling of meetings are often more inocuous in terms of their overall impact on the organization, than ones regarding financial matters. Hage and Aiken (1967) operationalized centralization as participation in decision-making about resource allocation and organizational policy. A second measure they used was the degree to which the position occupant makes decisions regarding his or her own work. An important part of this study will be to identify the types of decisions that are made in the amateur sport organization and secondly, to see how they are made or by whom they are made.

Closely related to both the distribution of decision-making authority and specialization is configuration. The span of control (horizontal differentiation) and the height of the organizational hierarchy (vertical differentiation) are typical measures of configuration (Pugh and Hickson, 1976). A pictoral image of an organization's shape is often depicted by an organizational chart.

In summary, one question with which this study was concerned was to determine the structural characteristics of the Alberta Section. These characteristics were examined in relation to the dimensions suggested by the Aston group: specialization, formalization, standardization, centralization and configuration.

C. Organizational Environments

The second area investigated in this study was the nature of a voluntary sport organization's environment. Since the mid 1960's, formal organizations, as a study population, have come to be recognized as open systems subject to the constraints and contingencies of the external environment. Thompson (1967) and Katz and Kahn (1966) argued for the open systems approach to viewing organizations. The traditional closed system approach viewed organizations as autonomous and unhindered by occurances beyond their boundaries. In contrast, the open system strategy described by Thompson (1967) "shifts attention from goal achievement to survival, and incorporates uncertainty by recognizing organizational interdependence with environment" (p. 13). Buckley (1967) underscored the importance of the environment: "that a system is open means, not simply, that it engages in interchange with the environment, but that the interchange is an essential factor underlying the system's viability" (p. 50).

The environment has been considered in relation to managerial autonomy (Dill, 1958), structuring of boundary-spanning units (Thompson, 1967), organizational survival and adaptation (Emery and Trist, 1965; Terreberry, 1968) and organizational design (Burns and Stalker, 1961; Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967; Duncan, 1972; Negandhi and Reimann, 1973).

A study of national voluntary associations by Simpson and Gulley (1962) examined the ways in which the environment and goals of an organization influence its internal characteristics. Increasing complexity was hypothesized to be a consequence of the number of organizational goals pursued and the number of different constituent groups served. Simpson and Gulley's (1962) definition of complexity included both internal (goals) and external (constituents) elements to describe pressure. Their findings seemed to support the proposition that organizational characteristics relate to the goals and environmental pressures in which an organization operates. In particular, organizations operating in complex situations, tended to be relatively decentralized and placed greater emphasis on member involvement and communication (Simpson and Gulley, 1962, p. 350). Simpson and Gulley reasoned that these mechanisms enabled the leaders to know what the members were doing and wanted to do, and vice versa.

Thus, the environment is not only important as a social context within which organizations exist, but as a determinant of organizational structure and process. The environment is limitless and includes "all phenomena that are external to and potentially or actually influence the population under study" (Hawley, 1968, p. 330). As Thompson (1967, p. 27) suggested, an "everything else" notion of the environment is a residual one. A major task of organizational environment theorists has been to describe specific characteristics of these phenomena and secondly to describe the potential impact of the environment on an organization.

In describing the environment, two dimensions that have appeared frequently are rate of change and complexity. The central argument has been that increasing rates of change and increasing complexity in an organization's environment, produce greater organizational uncertainty. Uncertainty refers to a lack of information about future events and thus it has consequences for organizational planning and decision-making (Miles, 1982, p. 15). A major task facing all organizations is considered to be the reduction or management of uncertainty (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978).

Child (1972, p. 3) suggested that three variables effecting the rate of change in an environment and the impact of that change on an organization are as follows: 1) frequency of change; 2) degree of difference involved at each change; and 3) the variability or pattern of change. Rate of change is often described using the terms stable and dynamic to reflect low and high change conditions.

For profit organizations, operational measures of environmental stability might include shifts in consumer demands or technological innovation, such as those recently experienced in the micro-computer industry. For voluntary groups, shifts in membership opinion or changing priorities of funding agencies are examples of environmental change. One method of measuring unpredictable change in the environment would be a retrospective comparison of "records of long-range organizational plans to what was realized" (Miles, 1982, p. 228).

The second dimension used to describe the organizational environment is complexity. Complexity is a function of: 1) the disparity among relevant environmental activities; and 2) the number of these different activities (Jurkovich, 1974, p. 381). Complexity ranges from simple to complex. Other terms used to describe this dimension are homogeneity and heterogeneity (cf. Thompson, 1967; Duncan, 1972).

An environment that is complex is characterized by a large number of different sectors or features that are important for organizational survival (Miles, 1982). In the case of voluntary organizations, this could be measured by the various categories of membership and the extent to which different non-member sectors, for example government, were relevant to the organization's operations.

A third aspect of complexity is variability, which Child (1972) posited would determine the extent to which environmental complexity leads to organizational uncertainty. Child (1972) described the link between complexity and uncertainty, stating that "the greater the degree of complexity, the more perfusion of relevant environmental information is likely to be experienced by organizational decision makers" (p. 3).

Thus, both rate of change and complexity are important dimensions for understanding the environmental context within which an organization exists. Although it would be simpler to discuss an organization's environment as uniform, that is, uniformly dynamic and complex, every organization faces multiple environmental aspects with disparate ranges (Mintzberg, 1983). For example, the members of a provincial sport association may demand similar services each year, representing a fairly stable element of the environment. At the same time however, the provincial government may alter its funding requirements year to year, affecting the organization's budgetary plans. Therefore, an environment may be stable but complex, or, one part of an organization's environment may be dynamic while the rest is relatively stable.

Analysis of the Environment

Analysis of an organization's environment require that it be segmented into specific content areas (Gillespie and Perry, 1975). Hall's (1982) distinction between specific and general environments provides a useful model for identifying content areas. The specific environment refers to other organizations, individuals and groups directly interacting with the focal organizations and having immediate relevance. The general environment is comprised of seven conditions which have potential relevance for a focal organization. These conditions or content areas include: 1) technology; 2) law; 3) politics; 4) economics; 5) demographics; 6) ecology; and 7) culture. Hall's (1982) scheme can be applied to the analysis of voluntary sport organization's environments. For example, all voluntary sport groups have been affected by the increased role of government in sport (Broom and Baka, 1978). A change in government could drastically alter that role. The current economic situation may be affecting voluntary sport group's ability to garner financial and human resources. As Hall (1982) noted, "in periods of economic distress, an organization is likely to cut back or eliminate those programs it feels are least important to its overall goals" (p. 230). The impact of technological developments in the area of coaching may challenge a voluntary sport group's system of training and developing athletes. How quickly coaching innovations are adopted and implemented, could in turn affect performances at the international level. A further example of technological condition that affected the development of amateur swimming in Alberta was the building of standard length indoor swimming pools (Slack, 1983).

Thus, while other individuals, groups and organizations may comprise a significant portion of the environment as discussed below, broader forces, such as the political climate, the economy or the cultural mileu, must be included in the analysis of an organization's environment. In this study, the general environment of the Alberta Section will be examined in relation to Hall's seven conditions. Further analysis will focus on the specific environment, or the interorganizational relationships, of the Alberta Section.

Interorganizational Environments

Perrow (1970) contended that "to any organization, the most important segment of the environment is other organizations, particularly organizations of competitors and customers" (p. 97). Since organizations cannot generate internally all the resources and services they need, organizations interact with other organizations (Aldrich, 1979). As well, interactions have been conceptualized as strategies that an organization uses to manage its environment, for example, cooptation, joint ventures and formal contracts. Thus, the nature and pattern of these interactions is an important area of organizational research.

The three basic forms of interorganizational relationships are the dyad, the set and the network (Hall, 1982). The dyadic relationship is the simplist form involving a single pair of interacting organizations. The interorganizational set relationship includes all interactions of one particular organization (Evan, 1966). Essentially, the set is an aggregation of pair-wise or dyadic relations. An interorganizational network is more extensive, including all organizations and their linkages within a population of organizations (Van de Ven and Ferry, 1980).

Since the unit of analysis in this study was a single organization, the form of interorganizational relationships examined was the set. Aldrich (1979) suggested that members comprising the organizational set can be identified by examining "(1) resource flows, whether of information, goods, services, or other resources, and (2) contact between boundary roles of the focal organization and others" (p. 280). Strictly speaking, organizations do not interact with other organizations, individuals within them interact on behalf of the organization. Therefore, members of the Alberta Section interviewed for this study were asked to identify other individuals, groups and organizations with whom they interacted as part of their role position on the Executive Committee.

The analysis of interorganizational relationships has predominantly focused on two perspectives: exchange and power-dependency (Schmidt and Kochan, 1977). Both perspectives concern processes whereby resources flow between organizations. However, the former conotes a mutually contingent transaction involving equal value given for value received (Emerson, 1976). Aldrich (1979) noted that the term exchange describes processes of "normal" interdependencies between organizations. Levine and White (1961) distinguished exchange transactions as voluntary activity and not involving coercion or domination.

An inbalanced transaction, favouring one party over others and leading to dependence of some organizations on others, is the result of differential control over scarce resources (Aldrich, 1979). A condition of dependence has potential impact on the dependent organization's functionning. The most obvious example of this is when an organization depends on others for its raw materials. An important example of resource dependence was provided by Slack (1983) in a description of the interaction between a sport organization and the government:

> Over the past twenty years changes in political conditions, specifically increasing government involvement in sport, have continued to affect the development of the CASA(AS). Since the issuing of Bill C131, The Fitness and Amateur Sport Act, both the federal and provincial governments have become more heavily involved in sport. With this greater involvement has come an increased number of funds for programs, subsidization of administrative help and athlete assistance. Although this type of help has greatly assisted the CASA(AS) it has also created for them a resource dependency, particularly with the provincial government. The development of the CASA(AS) has

> consequently been somewhat tied to the program priorities of government agencies. (pp. 288-289)

Aldrich (1979) and Burt (1977) theorized that an organization's control over resources is a basis of power in particular relationships. This notion in based on Emerson's (1962) work, which views power as residing implicitely in another's dependency. Again, Slack's (1983) case study provides a useful illustration of power dependency emerging from a resource dependency situation:

> The public purse provides the funds to the CASA(AS) who in turn provides services to the public. A more critical analysis of this type of dyadic relationship would suggest that, rather than an exchange type of relationship, what is being built is a power dependency. Essentially this may be taken to mean that the government provides resources that are vital to the CASA(AS) but the reverse is not true, i.e., the government would not suffer great pressure if opportunities for competitive swimming were withdrawn in the province. Consequently, the government holds a position of power over the voluntary sport organizations. Some would suggest that government is able to use this power to emphasize their priorities in sport at the expense of those of the voluntary sport organizations. (p. 295)

There are several methods for analyzing interorganizational relationships in the organization set. Four bipartite dimensions suggested by Marrett (1971) and Aldrich (1979) for analyzing the structure of linkages between organizations are formalization, intensity, reciprocity and standardization.

Formalization refers to "the extent to which the requirements and characteristics of situations are explicit" (Marrett, 1971, p. 89). "Agreement formalization" indicates the extent to which transactions are either legislatively or administratively sanctioned by the parties involved. "Structural formalization" is the extent to which a coordinating mechanism, an intermediary, operates between two or more organizations. Sport councils, such as the International Olympic Committee, are one example of organizational mediators.

The kind and amount of involvement demanded of interacting organizations reflects the intensity of a relationship. The size of the resource investment is one indicator, and the frequency of interaction, or amount of contact between organizations, is a second measure of intensity. Aldrich (1979) posited that "formalization between agencies leads to more frequent interaction, and frequent interaction is likely to lead to further efforts toward formalizing relations" (p. 275).

Reciprocity refers to the flow or direction of exchange between organizations and reflects the degree to which there is mutual exchange of elements, such as resources or information. Another approach to reciprocity is the extent to which the terms of the exchange are mutually reached. A factor that affects reciprocity, is the extent to which one organization dominates the relationship (Aldrich, 1979).

The fourth dimension of interorganizational analysis is standardization. The extent to which units of exchange are clearly delineated is indicative of "unit standardization". Clear delination of rules and procedures for exchange is indicative of "procedural standardization". Standardization differs from formalization in that the existence of official agreement does not necessitate explicitness insofar as details are concerned (Marrett, 1971). However, structural formalization may necessitate standardization.

Marrett (1971) hypothesized that certain dimensions would be more influential in the interaction process. In particular, she proposed that the larger the size of the resource investment, the greater the likelihood of a highly formalized and standardized relationship. The kind of investment and commitment required of this type of situation, led her to conclude that it would occur less often than relations characterized by low formality, standardization and intensity. In a study of organizations concerned with problem youth, Hall et al. (1977) found the greatest proportion (74%) of interrelationships to have a voluntary, ad-hoc type, basis. Legally mandated and formalized relationships followed at 15% and 11% respectively. These findings would seem to support Marrett's contention regarding normative interorganizational relationships.

Using the four dimensions described above, the typical transactions and relations that existed between members comprising the organizational set of the Alberta Section were examined. Thus, the nature of the Alberta Section's environment was investigated firstly by examining general conditions impacting on the organization and secondly, by analyzing the interorganizational relationships of that organization.

D. Environment and the Organizational Structure

The final question dealt with in this study was how environmental factors related to structural characteristics of the volunteer sport organization. In order to examine this link, two areas need to be considered: a) how does the environment become known to the organization, and b) how does the organization cope with or manage that environment. In part, the environment becomes known through the organization's choice of activity. Levine and White (1961) introduced the concept of "domain choice" to describe the strategic choice of an organization's environment. "An organization's domain consists of those activities it intends to pursue" (Miles, 1982, p. 25). The domain also implies decisions regarding the location of the organization and the type of clientele to be served. For example, the domain of an amateur sport group might include activities relating to the training and development, performance and competition, of amateur athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, and so forth, involved in a particular sport discipline. In terms of location, a provincial level organization would serve a much narrower geographic domain than a national or international sport group. By choosing a domain, an organization limits its involvement to varying degrees.

Starbuck (1976) contended that organizations choose among alternative environments and then select aspects with which it will deal. As well as processes of perception, attention and interpretation, the enactment or choice of environment is influenced by "organizational structures, information systems, and the distribution of power and control within the organization" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 260). Child (1972) has argued that perceptions and actions of those in power and control positions strongly influence organizational responses to the environment: "the critical link lies in the decision-maker's evaluation of the organization's position in the environmental areas they regard as important, and in the action they may consequently take about its internal structure" (p. 10). Although an organization's decision makers play a crucial role, organization's rarely choose their domain or their environment unilaterally (Thompson, 1967, p. 29). Thus, the issue of how the environment becomes known to the organization cannot be answered simply. Consideration must be given to perceptions and interpretations of decision makers, as well as processes of power and control.

Hall (1982) suggested that "organizational responses to environmental pressures are not automatic nor necessarily rational" (p. 221). Nevertheless, several strategies for coping with or managing organization environments have been identified. The major purposes of such strategies are to secure scarce resources and/or decrease environmental uncertainties.

Altering internal structures to more closely conform to environmental features and demands is one mechanism proposed by the contingency model. Perrow (1979) suggested that organizations attempt to cope with their environment by "setting up rules and positions which can make it possible to deal with the environment on a routine, predictable basis" (p. 55).

A second method, discussed previously, is domain choice. Organizational growth is a further option for dealing with scarcity of resources and uncertainty. Growth may occur as a result of expansion within the same domain or into new domains. Pfeffer (1972) suggested that "if a firm is too dependent upon a portion of the environment for absorbing its output, it may diversify into other product or service areas, and thereby hopefully reduce its dependence on the portions of the environment with which it previously dealt" (p. 384). Volunteer organizations may choose to increase their membership by easing entry or participation requirements. By tightening requirements, organizational growth can also be achieved. For example, sport organizations often require athletes to belong to a club or provincial association in order to participate in competitions.

Expansion into new domains was evidenced in Sills' (1957) study of an American voluntary organization. Sills (1957) predicted that the organization would turn to new programs once its original objectives had been accomplished, that is, once its input (need) no longer existed. Child and Kieser (1981) noted that "diversification among nonbusiness organizations...provides a means of securing additional support from the public" (p. 33). For example, groups which benefit only one province are less likely to receive federal support than groups organized on a national level.

Establishing interorganizational relationships is a further process used to influence the nature of the environment. Pfeffer and Salancik (1982) suggested that "organizations attempt to establish linkages with elements in their environment and use these linkages to access resources, to stabilize outcomes, and to avert environmental control" (p. 144). Along with the types of relationships discussed previously, i.e., formalized, another linkage that is particularly relevant to non-profit organizations is cooptation. Perrow (1970) described cooptation as a way of minimizing threats from the environment: "the organization coopts or brings into the organization leaders from the environment who then will have some say in the organization's policies" (p. 113). This method is often practised by voluntary and service type organizations who appoint prominant citizens to their boards (Perrow, 1979). Thompson and McEwan (1958) cautioned that strategies may themselves place limits on unilateral or arbitrary decisions that an organization can make. In Selznick's (1949) case study of the Tennessee Valley Authority, a disadvantage of cooptation that surfaced was the alteration of the organization's original objectives through the influence of the coopted members. Of course, alteration or redirection provided by new members from outside the organization, can have positive as well as negative affects on that organization.

A further strategy suggested by Weick (1976) involves the "loose coupling" of an organization's structure so that it is more sensitive and adaptable to the environment. This concept is based on the belief that if the parts of an organization are more independent, they will be able to know their own environment better and can adjust without affecting the whole system.

Thus, although organizations are influenced by their environment, they can employ strategies for reducing uncertainty and managing environmental contingencies. Starbuck (1976) went as far as to suggest that organizations "shape" their environments. Reality probably lies somewhere between the reactive perspective and the proactive perspective.

The relationship between external forces and internal characteristics of the volunteer sport organization will be examined in this study through the identification of mechanisms employed to cope with or manage environmental contingencies. In order to do this it will be necessary to develop an historical perspective. Therefore, the history of the organization under study will be analyzed from the viewpoint of determining changes in structural characteristics and factors relating to those changes.

III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A. Development of the Research Problem

The development of the research problem involved a series of interrelated and overlapping processes. Beginning with a general interest in the administration of amateur sport, the literature on organizational analysis was reviewed. This preliminary phase narrowed the focus of attention to the subject of organizational environments and their impact on the function and behavior of amateur sport organizations.

A further consequence of the preliminary review, was the decision to undertake an essentially qualitative research approach. This decision was based on two factors:

1. There is a dearth of research and information about the day to day operations of amateur sport organizations. Thus, collection of qualitative data is important and should include detailed descriptions of people, places and events, providing a depth of understanding.
2. There appears to be an increasing distrust and scepticism among organizational observers on "the ability of conventional data collection techniques to produce data that do not distort, do violence to, or otherwise falsely portray the phenomenon such methods seek to reveal" (Van Maanen, 1979, p. 522). Mintzberg (1979) has contended that organizational behavior is best understood in context: "measuring in real organizational terms means measuring things that really happen in organizations, as they experience them" (p. 586). Otherwise, the researcher risks violating the organization by forcing it "into abstract categories that have nothing to do with how it functions" (Mintzberg, 1979, p. 586).

Research methodologies which seek to describe and understand a phenomena in all its complexity, as opposed to predefining variables and their relationships, are an important stage in the development of theory. The concepts and methodologies used in the qualitative research approach[3] were thus well suited to the aims of this study.

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[3] The writer has chosen to use the words "qualitative research" as an umbrella term. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) suggested using this term to refer to several research strategies that share certain characteristics. Thus, qualitative research includes terms such as field work, naturalistic, descriptive, ethnographic and case study.

Gaining Entry

The next stage of the study was to gain entrance into the organization. Essentially this involved obtaining permission to do research on the Alberta Section from the individual or individuals responsible for matters. In order to determine how to approach the Alberta Section, the researcher conferred with Slack who had worked as a planning consultant for the Alberta Section a few months previously. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) suggested that certain information must be gathered in preparation for negotiating entry. Specifically, they recommended finding out who to approach in the organization and how to approach them. This implies gaining information of the "identities and power alignments of the principals at the site" (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 19). In this study, Slack contacted the Executive Director of the Alberta Section who suggested that a written request outlining the proposed study should be sent to the Chairman of the Section. After the letter was sent, a follow-up telephone call was made to determine the status of the request. The Executive Committee of the Section had met and discussed the proposal and permission was granted. Typically, the researcher will work through the hierarchy of an organization to gain entry; however, "once authorization is gained, the researcher symbolically disengages himself from the leadership in order to establish his independence" (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 20).

In order to identify the important questions and to become familiar with the organization, the researcher met with the Executive Director on two initial occassions to discuss the general topic area of the study and acquire written materials about the Alberta Section (i.e., newsletters, minutes, reports, Rulebook, constitution and by-laws).

B. Research Methodology and Instrumentation

With regard to the appropriate selection and application of methods, Schatzman and Strauss (1973) suggested that:

> A method of inquiry is adequate when its operations are logically consistent with the questions being asked; when it adapts to the special characteristics of the thing or event being examined; and when its operations provide information, evidence, and even simply perspective that bear upon the questions posed. (p. 8)

In this study, the primary strategies used to collect the data fell into three major groupings: observation, document analysis and interviewing. Although three different methods were employed, boundaries between these methods were not distinct. As McCall and Simmons (1969) noted in a discussion of just one of these methods:

> It is probably misleading to regard participant observation as a single method...[it] involves some amount of genuine social interaction in the field with the subjects of the study, some direct observation of relevant events, some formal and a great deal of informal interviewing, some systematic counting, some collection of documents and artifacts, and open-endedness in the directions the study takes. (p. 1)

As with research employing primarily quantitative techniques, qualitative research is concerned with establishing the trustworthiness of the information gathered and the interpretations that are drawn. Guba and Lincoln (1981, p. 104) argued that the terms credibility and auditability be substituted for the scientifcally oriented terms validity and reliability. One method of establishing credibility is triangulation. Triangulation is a strategy whereby a combination of two or more methods are used to study the same phenomenon. Such an approach was taken in this study, the three methods being observation, document analysis and interviewing. The basic assumption of triangulation is that the weaknesses of each single method are counterbalanced by the strengths of another method (Jick, 1979, p. 604). That different methods could lead to different results, may not be negative. The researcher must reconcile these differences and in so doing, it may lead to a better explanation, i.e., by uncovering unexpected or unseen factors (Jick, 1979).

Auditability or replicability should be judged by competent "outsiders" who review the data collection and analysis procedures on the basis of documentation developed during the project (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 186). The documentation for this study is the resultant thesis which will be judged by a panel of academicians. However, as noted by Sieber (1976), an emphasis on reliability or auditability "will only undermine that unique function" (p. 1) of fieldwork. That unique function is "to uncover a diversity of relevant responses whether or not they were anticipated by the inquirer" (Merton, Fiske and Kendall, 1956, pp. 12-13). Similarly, the extent to which results are generalizable is limited since the purpose of qualitative research is to gather in-depth understanding of a phenomenon reflected in a relatively small group setting and not to predict (Miller, 1982). Therefore, in this study, the findings were specific to the Alberta Section and were not generalizable to other amateur sport organizations.

Observation

Katz (1953) suggested a major advantage of field research is "the opportunity for the direct observation of interaction and social relationships" (p. 81) as opposed to drawing inferences from the subject's recall of events and processes. Observation is also advantageous as a means of checking for accuracy of data collected verbally, i.e., through interviews (Richardson, Dobrenwend, Klein, 1965). Observation is "purposeful and selective watching, counting, listening to, or even smelling of objects or phenomena as they take place" (Richardson _et al._, 1965, p. 9).

Observation was used in this study; however, its role was limited. As an organization run mostly by volunteer administrators, the operations of the Alberta Section are carried on throughout the province, wherever these members live. The Executive Committee meets four to five times a year and only under special circumstances would the majority of members be physically located at one site, eg., the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Thus, to get at the "daily life" of the organization and the people belonging to that organization, was not possible in the traditional sense of extensive observation. Therefore, observation was used in the following situations: 1) during the researcher's visits to the Alberta Section office; 2) during interviews with selected Alberta Section members; 3) during a Alberta Section Executive Committee meeting; and 4) during the Alberta Section 1983 AGM. The latter two events occurred in Red Deer, Alberta on April 30 and May 1, 1983. The researcher attended for the duration of each meeting. As well, there were several opportunities to meet informally with the participants over the course of the two days, i.e., during breaks, over lunch, and at evening "socials". Since all but one of the formal interviews were completed prior to the meetings, there was an opportunity to informally interview some of these same individuals to elicit their reactions and interpretations of events that occurred.

In every circumstance, the researcher's identity and general purpose was known. A disadvantage of observation is that the observer's presence may influence, alter, or prevent certain behavior from occurring. Over time this influence should diminish (Richardson et al., 1965).

Information arising from observations, was collected in the form of field notes. Schwartz and Jacobs (1979) suggested that field notes be as literal as possible, avoiding interpretations and theories. Notes were taken either during or directly following the observation period depending upon which method was least obtrusive.

Document Analysis

Schatzman and Strauss (1973) described the use of secondary sources or written documents as "equivalent to making critical, careful observations of the situations through instruments devised by others" (p. 14). Written documents are often the only source of certain kinds of information, such as statistical records, dates, names, policies and rules, particularly in the case of historical information. As well, documents are a means whereby the researcher can become familiar with the unit of study, its language, and structure. Documents can also be used to corroborate data collected by other means. However, documents are only as accurate as their compilers and can be misleading (Richardson et al., 1965). Angell and Freedman (1953) suggested that validity be established by knowing the context in which the document was written, i.e., its purpose, was it meeting minutes or promotional material.

A number of official and unofficial documents were used in this study. Some yielded data while others provided an orientation to the subject matter. The types of documents used included the following:

CFSA publications
Alberta Section publications
Alberta Section minutes

Alberta Section reports

Internal memos and communications

External communications/newsreleases

Alberta Section records and files

CFSA and Alberta Section Constitution and By-Laws

CFSA Official Rulebook

Most of these materials were located in the Provincial Archives of Alberta. Other materials located in the Alberta Section office were supplied by the Executive Director upon request. As well, a number of the individuals interviewed provided written materials to the researcher. Documents chronicling the history of the Alberta Section, since it was formed in 1969, were collected.

Interviewing

The dominant method of data collection for this study was the interview. Kahn and Cannell (1957) defined the interview as a "specialized pattern of verbal interaction--initiated for a specific purpose, and focused on some specific content area, with consequent elimination of extraneous material" (p. 16).

Interviews vary in the degree to which they are structured. In an extremely structured interview, the content is rigidly controlled by the interviewer (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). This form assumes that the interviewer already knows what it is the interview is designed to uncover (Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979). At the opposite extreme, the unstructured interview, the respondent plays a major role in defining the content area of the interview and hense the direction the study will take. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) related the stages of research to changes in the type of interview employed:

> At the beginning of the project, for example, it might be important to use the more free-flowing, exploratory interview because your purpose at that point is to get a general understanding of a range of perspectives on a topic. After the investigatory work has been done, you may want to structure interviews more in order to get comparable data across a larger sample or to focus on particular topics that emerged during the preliminary interviews. (p. 136)

In this study, the initial exploratory stage included informal, unstructured meetings with the Executive Director. Following this, a structured interview schedule was designed. Although the schedule was structured to focus on certain topics, the questions were open-ended.

C. Designing the Interview Schedule

Hari Das (1983) aptly noted that "the results of interviews are as good as the questions asked" (p. 309). However, developing good, open-ended, neutral and clear questions is difficult. Guba and Lincoln (1981) outlined a number of considerations for framing and contructing questions:

1. Is this question necessary? How will the response be used? Analyzed?
2. Does this question cover the topic? Are other additional questions necessary?
3. How will this question be interpreted? Does the interviewer need other facts concerning the matter before the answer will make sense? Does the interviewer need or want knowledge of the respondent's attidue (preferences, values, beliefs) on the matter: If so, ought one to probe the content, intensity, stability, or depth of those attitudes, values, feelings? What dimensions would be valuable to have?
4. Do the respondents have the information to answer the question? Has the interviewer allowed for differences? How reliable would the interviewer expect the responses to be?
5. How valid overall does the interviewer expect the answer to be? Is the question leading? Is it framed in value-neutral terms? Is it part of a response set? Is the response likely to be adequate? Will the respondent be willing to give the information? Under what circumstances? What assumptions are implicit in the question? what is taken for granted by the interviewer? What are possible frames of reference for the question? (p. 177)

These considerations were applied to questions included in the interview schedule. Questions were developed out of the three sub-problem areas of the study as outlined in Chapter I. Items on organizational structure were devised from the basic constructs of the Aston instrument.[4] Items on both the general and specific (interorganizational) environment were devised from the writings of Hall (1982), Marrett (1971) and Aldrich (1979), and from the instrument used by Hall et al. (1977) to examine patterns of interorganizational relationships.

Preliminary drafts of the questionnaire were submitted to individual judges knowledgeable in the areas of organizational theory, volunteer organizations and research methodologies. Their input as to the clarity and appropriateness of each question was used to revise the interview schedule into its final form.

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[4] The original Aston instrument was kindly made available to the researcher by a member of that group, Professor C.R. Hinings, currently at the University of Alberta.

The schedule was designed to permit a flexible but fluid format (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). Questions were ordered based on logical transitions from item to item rather than exhausting all aspects of a sub-problem in sequence. Although some questions were conducive to yes/no types of response, all questions were essentially open-ended. Three particular questions, 34, 36 and 42, were of a "forced choice" type and used a five-point Likert scale. Two reasons for doing this were to give the respondents a reference point, and secondly, to provide some quantifiable measure for comparison across interviews for those particular questions. However, this tactic was taken with the belief that "respondents virtually always will insist on explaining why they chose one alternative rather than another, or explain why they cannot" (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 72).

The final edition of the interview schedule was as follows:

Executive Committee Interview Schedule

1. What is your position on the Executive Committee of the Alberta Section?
2. How long have you held this position?
3. Could you explain how and why you became involved in the administration of figure skating?
4. Do you have any special qualifications or skills which assist you in fulfilling the position?
5. Does the Alberta Section provide any training opportunities for committee members? (if yes) Have you taken this _? (if yes) Did it help you in your position?
6. Have you held any other positions on the Executive Committee of this or some other Section of the CFSA?
7. Have you held any positions on the CFSA's Board of Directors?
8. Could you tell me when the office of _ was created?
9. Do you know the reason for this position being put into place?
10. Would you describe the activities or tasks you perform as _?
11. How were you made aware of these tasks, for example, is there a job description?
12. Do you perform any tasks that are part of your overall Executive Committee responsibilities, but which are not specifically related to your position as _?
13. Do any of your _ tasks overlap or combine with other individual's roles?
14. How many hours a week do you spend on Executive Committee business? Does this vary throughout the year?
15. How much of this time relates specifically to your position as _?
16. Are there any written documents to which you can refer about your position and about other aspects of the administration of skating?
17. Have you referred to them? (if no) Why not?
    (if yes) What kinds of information do these documents give?
18. To what extent are the activities you undertake governed by rules and procedures?
19. How strictly are the rules and regulations of the Alberta Section enforced?

20. In your opinion, what is the purpose of the "Official Rulebook"?
21. How are new rules added and old ones changed or removed from the "Official Rulebook"?
22. Are there any special forms that you use to carry out your role as __, for example, special reporting forms or attendance sheets? (if yes) Who designed these forms?
23. Do you report to anyone in the Section regarding your Executive Committee responsibilities? (if yes) How often do you report and what do you report?
24. Do you report to anyone in the CFSA?
25. Does anyone in the Section report directly to you? (if yes) How many?
26. If the Section Chairman wanted to convey official information, for example, a new policy regarding testing, to the skaters, what process would he follow?
27. If a skater wanted to appeal an Executive Committee decision, what steps would he or she take?
28. What steps would a skater take in order to appeal a CFSA Board decision?
29. How many figure skating meetings do you attend each year? How are these divided between Executive Committee meetings and other meetings, for example, AGM's?
30. Who decides the number of Executive Committee meetings and when these will be held?
31. Who sets the agenda for Executive Committee meetings?
32. Who prepares the budget or allocation of Section monies?
33. If there are unbudgeted or unallocated monies, who decides how these will be spent?
34. Who determines what summer schools will be sanctioned?
35. How are decisions made regarding the hosting and sanctioning of competitions at:
    a. the club level
    b. the interclub level
    c. the zone or regional level
    d. the sectional level
    e. the divisional level
    f. the national level
    g. the international level
36. What decisions do you make in regard to your position?
37. How do you know when to make a decision or when to refer to someone else?
38. Once a decision is made, how and to whom is that information conveyed?
39. Are some types of decisions written down more than others, for example, those pertaining to financial matters?
40. I am interested in the amount of influence various member groups have in the development of rules, policies and procedures in the Alberta Section. On a five point scale where one equals "little or no influence" and five equals "a great deal of influence", could you place each of the following groups?
    a. executive committee members
    b. coaches
    c. parents
    d. figure skaters
    e. club executive members
    f. CFSA Board of Directors
41. What are the major organizations, groups or individuals within and outside of the Executive Committee, that you had contact with during the past year?
42. Could you explain the reasons why you contacted __?
43. To what extent have the terms of the relationship between you and __ been explicitly verbalized?
44. To what extent have the terms of the relationship between you and __ been written down in detail?
45. During the past 6 months, how frequently have you communicated or been in contact with __?
46. How are most of the contacts made, e.g., face to face, telephone, written communication, etc.?

47. On a five point scale where one equals "not important" and five equals "very important", could you estimate the importance of these other organizations you identified, for the Section to accomplish its goals and objectives?
48. In which geographic areas of the province is skating the strongest?
49. What is the reason for these areas being stronger?
50. Since your involvement in figure skating began, what outside factors or influences, such as the economic or political climate, have affected figure skating?
51. In what ways has the Section office at the Percy Page Centre affected skating in this province?

D. Selection of Sample and Administration of Inteview

Guba and Lincoln (1981) suggested that "respondents are usually selected because of their special characteristics that is, they have special knowledge of, or familiarity with, the situation, they have information (or are likely to have) to which others are not privy, they have special status of some sort, or they are one of a kind" (p. 166). In this study, the majority of respondents were purposively selected from the 1982-83 Executive Committee membership. Luschen (1981) suggested that interviewing executives of sport organizations is valid "because the executives of an organization intimately involved in everyday procedures and often displaying a high degree of identity, notably with voluntary organizations, will have valuable insights" (p. 318). Of the 21 members of the 1982-83 Executive Committee, 12 were selected to be interviewed. The remaining two respondents included the Executive Director and an individual who was no longer active on the Executive Committee, but who had been intimitely involved in the Alberta Section during its formative years. The study was mainly concerned with the present situation and although historical and developmental information was considered relevant, it was not a significant enough focus to require interviewing several former members of the Executive Committee.

A list of names, position titles, addresses and telephone numbers of the Executive committee was obtained from the Executive Director. The primary method for selecting respondents was based on the breakdown of committee membership in the Alberta Section Constitution and By-Laws, Article V. According to that document, the Executive Committee is divided into the following four groups:

1. Five elected executive members (Chairman, Past-Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen, Secretary/Treasurer).
2. Eight zone and regional directors (Calgary, Edmonton, Central, Northeast, Northwest, Southern, Peace River and N.W.T. Region).
3. Four committee chairmen (Judges, NST, Accounts, Skaters Development).
4. Four standing committee representatives (Public Relations, Winter Games, Singles Seminar, Precision Skating).

Four executive members (1. above) were selected and three of the committee chairmen (3. above). Two of the standing committee representatives (4. above), and three zone directors (2. above) were selected. Accessibility and representativeness were the major factors used to choose within the four groupings described above.

Respondents were telephoned to request their participation in the interivew. If the respondent agreed to participate, a convenient time and place for the interview was arranged. Respondents were immediately sent a letter specifying the time, date and location that had been agreed upon. This letter also included phone numbers at which the researcher could be reached to change the scheduled interview if necessary. One to two days prior to each of the interviews, respondents were telephoned to reconfirm. The first interview was held on March 29 and the final one was completed on May 10, 1983. The interviews varied in length from half an hour to three hours, with an average time of 1 1/4 hours.

As Bogdan and Biklen (1982) noted "a good part of the work [of an interview] involves building a relationship, getting to know each other, and putting the subject at ease" (p. 135). The interviewer should begin by establishing a favourable rapport and clarifying the purposes and objectives of the interview at the outset (Merton et al., 1956). Schatzman and Strauss (1973) suggested that the researcher prepare a written statement briefly outlining the purpose of the study, what the interview would involve and how the gathered material would be used. A one page statement was used in this study. The introductory statement included a request to use a taperecorder to record the interview. After having read the statement, the respondent was invited to ask questions for further clarification. Once it appeared that the respondent was ready to begin the formal interview, the taperecorder was turned on and the interview began. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) recommended a taperecorder be used "when a study involves extensive interviewing or when interviewing is the major technique in the study" (p. 93). In this study, all formal interview were taperecorded with the permission of the respondents.

E. Treatment of the Interview Data

The interview transcripts were typed. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982) a one hour interview yields approximately forty double spaced typewritten pages. This represents ten to twelve hours of transcribing per interview. In order to save time, and because much of the data becomes repetitive with each successive interview, Bogdan and Biklen (1982) suggested the following procedure:[5]

> Transcribe some of the first interviews more or less completely (when we say "completely" we mean it would be all right to leave out long discussions of recipes and baseball), and then narrow what you transcribe in later interviews. As the study goes on, you should have a better idea about your focus and be more sensitively selective in what is typed. (p. 96)

Schatzman and Strauss (1973) also contended that as the researcher becomes more familiar "with the general activites and vocabularies of the scene or "world" that he is observing...his observation and his interviews need not cover every aspect of activity or nuance of verbal meaning" (p. 45). Thus, not only does the transcribing become more selective, but in some instances, the interviewing becomes more focussed and may not need to cover all of the questions covered in initial interviews.

Completed transcripts were checked for accuracy against the original tape. The transcripts included the interviewer's questions and comments.[6] The name of the person interviewed, the date and place of the interiew were recorded on the transcript along with an identification code which was placed at the top of each subsequent page.

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[5] It should be noted that this procedure is only useful when the researcher is transcribing the interviews him or herself.

[6] Bogdan and Biklen (1982) suggested this information is important "to weigh the respondent's remarks appropriately" (p. 95).

F. Data Analysis

The first stage of data analysis in this study was to code the data into categories. Coding categories were identified from the conceptual framework used in the study and from topics and patterns that emerged during and after data collection. Units of data were assigned to the categories, with some units being coded into more than one category. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) defined units of data as the "pieces of your fieldnotes, transcripts, or documents that fall under the particular topic represented by the coding category. Units of data are usually paragraphs in the fieldnotes and interview transcripts, but sometimes they can be sentences or sequences of paragraphs" (p. 165).

The second stage of data analysis was to analyze the content of each category. Holsti (1969) described content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages" (p. 14). The framework for interpreting the findings in this study was provided by several theorists on organizational environments, interorganizational relationships and organizational structures.

G. Summary

The basic data for this study were produced through interviews with individuals intimately involved in the administration of the Alberta Section. Additional information was assembled by examining records and publications of the Alberta Section and by observing the organization as it functionned in the office and at executive and general meetings. Thus, the overall design was that of a case study.

IV. DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

A. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to analyze the organizational environment and structure of the Alberta Section of the Canadian Figure Skating Association. However, before the three research questions outlined in Chapters I and II could be specifically addressed, it was necessary to provide a descriptive base for understanding the Alberta Section. Thus, the first part of this chapter focused on the historical development of figure skating generally and the Alberta Section in particular. As well, the services and program activities of the Alberta Section and the national Association were described. Due to the large number of terms that are very specific to the sport of figure skating, a glossary of terms is provided in Appendix A.

B. An Historical Overview of Figure Skating in Canada

Skating in Canada has progressed from its early use as a means of transportation in winter hunting, to a recreational pastime and an internationaly recognized sport.[7] Scullion (1975) cited the period between 1850 and 1885 as important to the development of figure skating in Canada:

> The first major innovation was the covered rink. This was extremely beneficial because of the severity of the winters...Covered rinks gave rise to organized clubs, and thus to skating carnivals, a more formalized style of recreational skating. (p. 22)

Competitions also began during this period.

Increased participation in the sport, both competitively and recreationally, gave rise to the need for governing bodies to control and coordinate its development. The first ruling body to be formed was the Amateur Skating Association of Canada on November 30, 1878 (West, 1978). A Montreal alderman, Louis Rubenstein,[8] founded the association which remained the ruling body for both speed and figure skating until 1914. At that time, the Figure Skating Department of a reorganized Canadian Amateur Skating Association was established. The first annual Canadian Figure Skating Championships were held that same year (1914). The department was renamed the Canadian Figure Skating Association (CFSA) in 1939 and in 1947 it joined the International Skating Union (ISU),' dropping its membership in the Canadian Amateur Skating Association. Since that time, the CFSA has continued as the national governing body for amateur figure skating. The Association represents one of the largest amateur sport organizations in the country, rivalled only by Canada's other major ice sport, minor hockey. In comparison to figure skating programs in other countries, the CFSA has the greatest number of members.

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[7] Major historical sources include: a) B. Penfold "Memories of the Old Western Section" in the 1965 Prairie Sectional Figure Skating Championship Program, pp. 11 and 25; b) N. Scullion "Figure Skating: A Reader's View" Canadian Skater, 2(2), 1975: 22-24; c) J.T. West "Well done, Rubenstein" Canadian Skater, 5(3), 1978: 10-11 (reprinted from Sport Ontario News, 1978, 7(2)).

[8] Rubenstein is also regarded as the first figure skating world champion, an honour

The basic structural relationship of governing bodies involved in figure skating at the time of the study (1982-83) is shown in Figure 1. As well, the link between the figure skating members of the Alberta Section and these organizations is shown in Figure 2. Since the formation of the CFSA in 1939, the most important structural change has been the development of the sectional level of operation. The various stages of this restructuring process are described below.

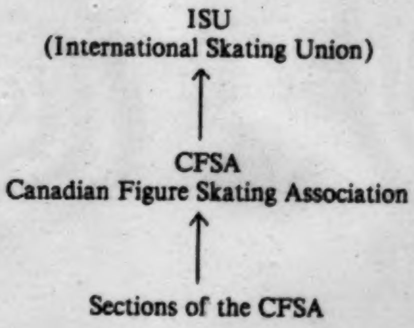
ISU
(International Skating Union)
CFSA
Canadian Figure Skating Association
Sections of the CFSA

Figure 1: The Structural Organization of Figure Skating Governing Bodies.

'(cont'd) he earned in the first World Championships in Russia in 1890 (West, 1978).

' The ISU was formed in 1892 and it is the international governing body for speed and figure skating and ice dancing world-wide.

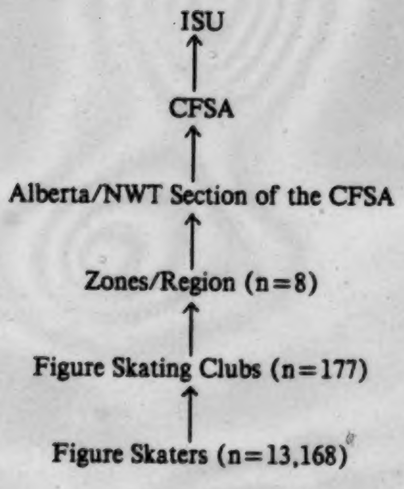
ISU
CFSA
Alberta/NWT Section of the CFSA
Zones/Region (n=8)
Figure Skating Clubs (n=177)
Figure Skaters (n=13,168)

Figure 2: The Relationship of Alberta Section
Figure Skaters to the Governing Bodies.

The development of organized skating in Western Canada can be traced to the post World War II years. Prior to 1945 the Canadian Championships were contested mainly by skaters from Ontario and Quebec. Penfold (1965) noted that beyond club level competitions, western skaters had few opportunities to compete. The Sectional structure began in 1947 with the division of Canada into east and west. The Western Section stretched from British Columbia to Manitoba and included the two territories. The Section served as an intermediary between clubs and the national governing body. However, its function was more than administrative; section level competitions were introduced as a qualifying round to the Canadian Championships in 1947.

Over the next 20 years the country was divided into ever smaller sections. For the west, 1959 and 1969 were important years in this regard. In 1959, British Columbia formed its own section and the three remaining provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, became known as the Prairie Section. The Yukon and Northwest Territories (NWT) were placed under the jurisdiction of the Prairie Section. The Prairie Section divided along provincial boundaries in 1969. The Yukon became a region under British Columbia and the NWT was attached to the newly formed Alberta Section for administrative assistance.[10] In total, 12 sections were formed in 1969 with the Atlantic Provinces dividing into three (Nova Scotia; New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island; Newfoundland and Labradour), Ontario dividing into four and the remaining five provinces each forming its own section. Presently there are 13 sections as a result of the division of New Brunswick and PEI. Thus, in a little more than two decades, Canadian figure skating developed from a three tier system of clubs, national and international governing bodies, to a four tier system with clubs, sectional, national and international levels.

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[10] The name that is registered under the Society's Act is the "Alberta/NWT

As described in the CFSA Official Rulebook (1221 (a)),[11] Canada was divided into sections "for the purposes of management and control". The competitive structure of figure skating was also closely related to the division of Canada into sections. Sectional competitions have been the first elimination round for skaters who want to qualify for the Canadian Championships since 1947. Progression was harder for skaters in the more populated regions of the country such as Ontario. The development of a sectional structure followed in part from the tremendous growth in participation experienced between 1947 and 1969. The number of clubs registered with the CFSA increased from 42 to 345 over that time period, an increase of 721% (see Figure 3). Canada's Barbara Ann Scott won the gold medal in the 1947 and 1948 World Championships and the 1948 Olympics and "suddenly, figure skating became the most popular winter sport in Canada" (Scullion, 1975, p. 25). The increased number of clubs meant greater workloads for the volunteer committees of the sections with large memberships. Other considerations in the restructuring process, particularly in regards to the west, were travel requirements and provincial identity. The various factors involved were described by J.V. as follows:[12]

> The powers of our national board at that time felt that the Prairie Section was too large and they had to break them into smaller pieces. And that is where it stands today

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[10](cont'd) Section". However, in many official and unofficial documents this name is shortened to the "Alberta Section". The latter terminology was adopted in this report.

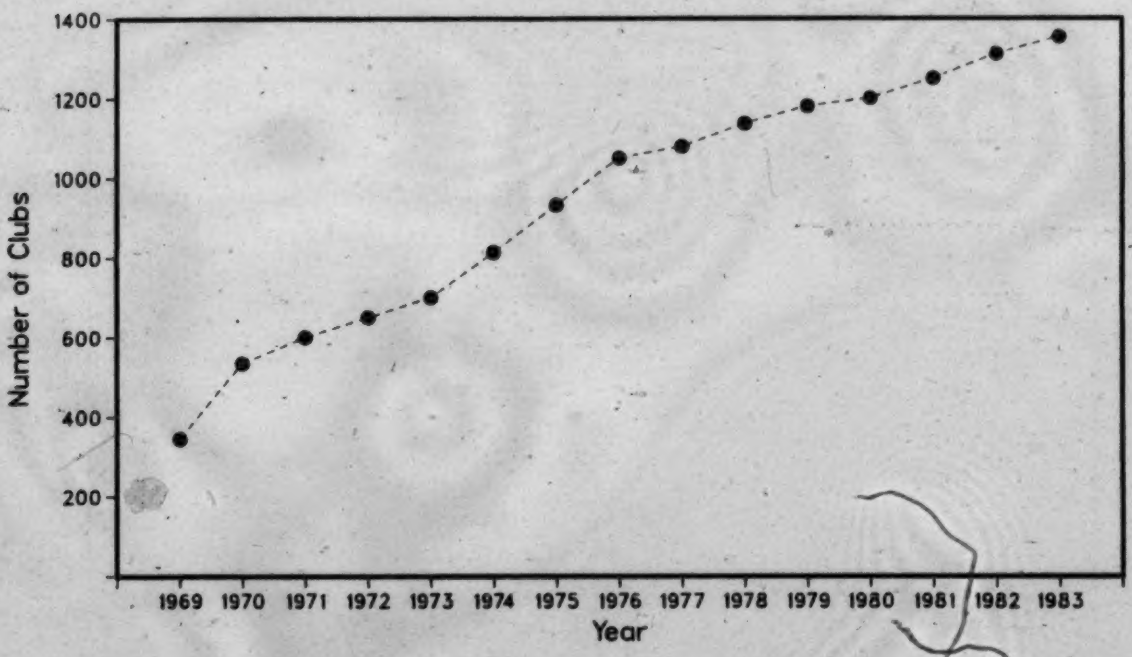
[11] Rule numbers used to reference quotations from the Rulebook are based on the 1982 revised edition.

[12] Quotations from the interviews conducted for this study are referenced in brackets such that the respondent's identity number and the transcript page number are given. Since respondents were quaranteed anonymity, initials and position titles are used in the presentation of findings.

> from that breakdown. They went by geographical provincial borders and made every province in Canada a section...Undoubtedly the provinces and the Chairman of the sections that were sitting on the board put pressure on the national board to make this come about. The advantages were the great number of miles. For an example, when we held a sectional competition, it had to be held at a big centre like Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, and it was a huge expense for skaters travelling to that area. Quite often people that wanted to participate at the section level found it a financial burden. In addition to that there is always a little rivalry between provinces. On top of that we were getting so many clubs it was getting unwieldy to handle...Anyway, within the wisdom of the national board, they decided to call Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba each a region for one year and for that year they would organize within themselves and send a quota of skaters to the Section Championships. (14:2)

In 1969, after one trial year as a region, the Alberta Section was formed. Skating clubs within the provincial boundaries of Alberta and the NWT who were "members in good standing" of the CFSA were considered to be members of the Alberta Section.

Figure 3: Growth of CFSA Clubs in Canada Since 1969



C. The Administration of Figure Skating

Based upon the situation at the time of the study (1982-83), the following is a description of the manner in which figure skating is administered. Organizational charts for the Alberta Section, the CFSA and the ISU are shown in Figures 4, 5 and 6 respectively.

The Alberta Section is managed by a Sectional Executive Committee comprised of 17 volunteer members. A professional Executive Director and four standing committee chairmen attend the Executive Committee meetings, but do not have voting privileges (Public Relations, Precision, Winter Games and Singles Seminar).

Four of the committee members are elected at the Section's Annual Meeting to which each club may send one voting delegate:[13] the Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen (Administration and Operations) and the Secretary-Treasurer. The Past-Chairman also sits on the Executive Committee. These five positions comprise the Board of Management.

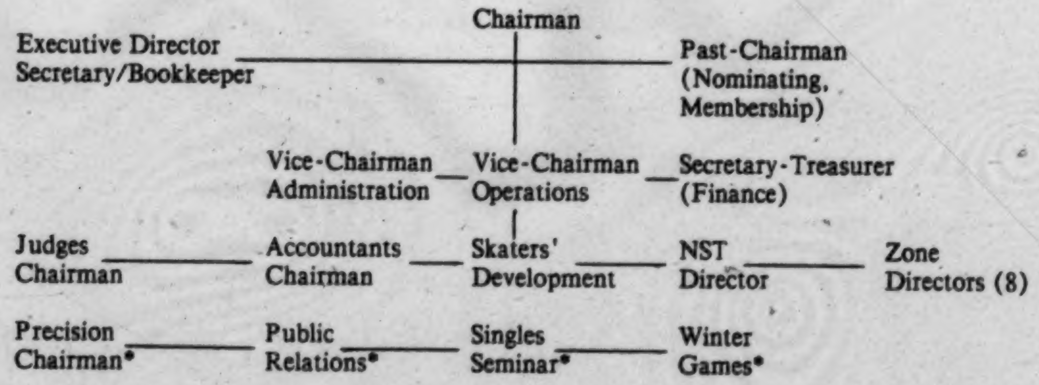

Chairman
Executive Director
Secretary/Bookkeeper
Past-Chairman
(Nominating,
Membership)
Vice-Chairman
Administration
Vice-Chairman
Operations
Secretary-Treasurer
(Finance)
Judges
Chairman
Accountants
Chairman
Skaters'
Development
NST
Director
Zone
Directors (8)
Precision
Chairman*
Public
Relations*
Singles
Seminar*
Winter
Games*

Figure 4: Organizational Chart of the
Alberta Section Executive Committee
(*Non-voting members)

The Board of Management is responsible for improving the administration of the Section through the review of policy, procedures, reports and so on, and the submission of recommendations to the Executive Committee. According to the Section's 1979 Terms of Reference, the Board also has "authority to commit the Section to expenditures for items not provided for in the budget up to $500.00 for any one expenditure, to a total of $1,500.00."

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[13] A club delegate, or Executive Committee member, may carry up to five proxy votes in addition to his or her own club vote.

Four of the committee members are appointed by the Section Chairman to fill various programming positions: Judges, Accountants, NST and Skaters' Development. These individuals chair committees responsible for each area. Committees range from one or two members to eight or nine members. Some program and standing committee chairmen have appointed assistants, but these individuals do not have voting privileges and are not usually in attendance at Sectional Executive Committee meetings.

The remaining eight voting members represent the eight geographic zones into which the Section is divided: NWT,[14] Northeastern, Northwestern, Peace River, Edmonton, Central, Calgary, and Southern. Zone Directors are elected at Annual Meetings of clubs within their respective zones and acclaimed onto the Executive Committee at the Section's Annual Meeting. A zone may elect other executive positions within the zone, such as an assistant zone director. These individuals do not sit on the Sectional Executive Committee but may be the zone representative to a corresponding Sectional standing or ad hoc committee such as the Judges Committee or the Skaters' Development Committee.

There are four other standing committees to which a member of the Executive Committee has been appointed as chairman in addition to their other responsibilities. These are the Nominating and Membership Committee under the portfolio of the Past-Chairman, the competitions Committee under the Vice-Chairman of Operations and the Finance Committee under the Secretary-Treasurer.

The term of office for any voting member of the Executive Committee is one year but there is no maximum to the number of consecutive terms that can be served. The Executive Committee meets five times throughout the year. The Section Annual Meeting is held late April or early May, prior to the CFSA Annual Meeting. The various standing and ad hoc committees meet as required, as does the Board of Management. Each zone must hold an Annual Meeting, but beyond that the zones vary with some holding monthly meetings.

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[14] The NWT is technically referred to as a Region, but its representation on the Section Executive is the equivalent of a zone director.

The Alberta Section has a policy whereby the Vice-Chairmen cannot be from the same zone as the Section Chairman.[15] This is to provide some balance of representation geographically on the Executive Committee and, more importantly, on the core committee (Board of Management). In 1982-83, each of the five members of the Board of Management were from a different zone. On the Executive Committee, Edmonton and Calgary were represented by the most members, with six from each zone.[16] The Terms of Reference for several of the Section's standing committees also specify that there be representation from different zones.

The Alberta Section operates an office at the Percy Page Centre in St. Albert. A full-time Executive Director and a part-time Secretary/Bookkeeper are employed to work from that office. The staff provide administrative assistance to the Section Executive Committee members and act as an information clearing house for clubs, officials, skaters and other volunteers. As well, some CFSA supplies are stocked there and certain printing and mailing of Section materials are done from the office.

The national body for figure skating, the CFSA, is managed by a 30 member Board of Directors. As shown in Figure 5, this Board is comprised of five elected officers (President, Past-President and three Vice-Presidents); eight elected directors; four appointed representatives (Male and Female Athlete, Coaching and ISU); and the 13 Section Chairmen. The elected officers, the immediate past-president, a representative of the directors and one of the Section Chairmen, and the Executive Director (non-voting) of the Association comprise an Executive Committee whose "powers shall consist of that delegated to it by the Board of

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[15] This policy was identified by several executive members interviewed and the Executive Director stated that it was written into the Section's constitution. However, the author could find no written record of the policy. Based on the executive members' knowledge of the policy, and the fact that the policy had been followed in practice, the author would predict that if it were ever questionned, a written rule would be put in place. This was one of the few unwritten norms of any significance that was uncovered in this study.

[16] In a study of volunteer sport administrators in Alberta, Slack (1978, p. 74) found that 83% lived in either Calgary or Edmonton. Similarly, Beamish (1978, p. 13) found 78% of national level administrators of amateur sport associations were from the larger urban areas of Canada.

Directors" (1214).

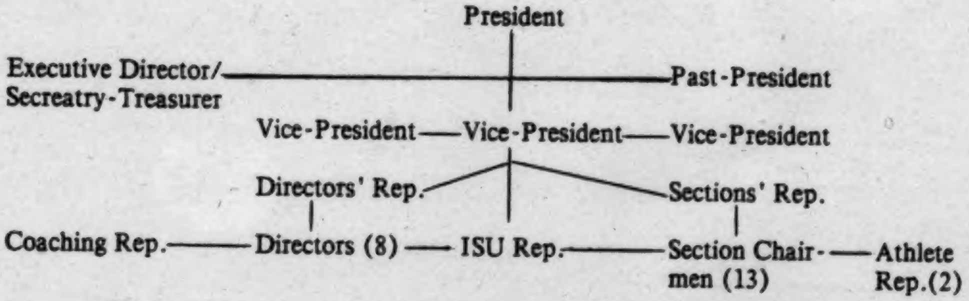
President
Executive Director/
Secreatry-Treasurer
Past-President
Vice-President
Vice-President
Vice-President
Directors' Rep.
Sections' Rep.
Coaching Rep.
Directors (8)
ISU Rep.
Section Chair-men (13)
Athlete Rep.(2)

Figure 5: Organizational
Chart of the CFSA

With the exception of Section Chairmen, who are nominated annually, the term of office for Board members is two years and there is no limit to the number of consecutive terms. The terms for officers and directors are staggered with half of the positions up for renewal each year.

There are fifteen standing committees of the CFSA and four ad hoc committees. Seven of the national committees have representation by each section. Those representative positions are filled by the Executive Committee member who holds the corresponding position at the section level, i.e., the Section Judges Chairman is a member of the CFSA Judges Committee. Other committee members are appointed by the Board of Directors. Rule 1222(e) states that, "whenever possible, members of committees shall be divided evenly between sections."

The CFSA has representation in two other organizations: the Canadian Olympic Association (1) and the Sports Federation of Canada (2). The latter is a federation of national amateur sport governing bodies.

The elected Board members are elected by club delegates at the Annual Meeting of the Association.[17] Although none of the 1982-83 elected members were from the Alberta Section, there have been officers and directors from Alberta in the past, including three CFSA Presidents. The tendancy however, is for the majority of elected members to be from the central sections, particularly those of Ontario (4) and Quebec. For example, 8 of the 13 elected Board members in 1982-83 were from either Ontario or Quebec, in addition to 8 non-elected members. The majority of the skating population is in central Canada and with one representative per club, the five central sections in Ontario and Quebec comprise the largest constituency.

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[17] Each club is permitted one vote and a delegate may carry an additional five proxy votes.

The CFSA operates an office in the National Sport and Recreation Centre (NSRC) in Ottawa, Ontario. The CFSA employs over 30 full and part-time staff who work at the Centre. The staff are organized into special divisions such as registration, marketing or supplies.

The international body for skating, the ISU, is managed by a President and two Vice-Presidents (figure and speed skating), six council members and four committees (figure, ice dance, speed and short track speed skating) as shown in Figure 6. The CFSA is represented by one member for a two year term. The ISU headquarters are located in Davos Platz, Switzerland. The ISU is the only international governing body for figure skating, but not all countries of the world are involved in the sport. At present there are only 20 countries.

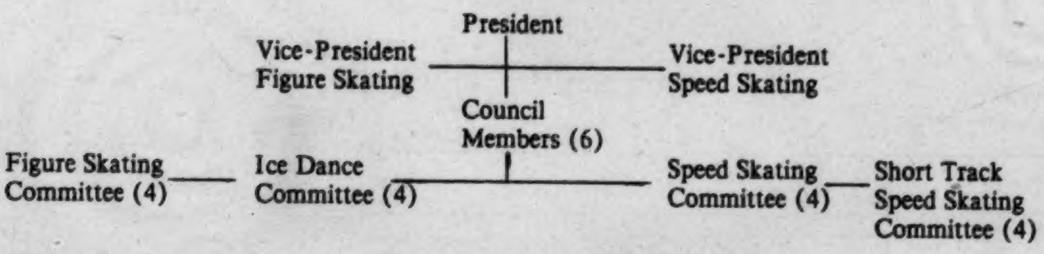
President
Vice-President Figure Skating
Vice-President Speed Skating
Council Members (6)
Figure Skating Committee (4)
Ice Dance Committee (4)
Speed Skating Committee (4)
Short Track Speed Skating Committee (4)

Figure 6: Organizational
Chart of the ISU

The major ISU meeting is held annually at the site of the World Championships. The CFSA holds its annual meeting in May in order to accomodate changes which arise from the ISU meeting (usually held in March). As well as rules changes, the ISU issues communiques to its members to clarify certain issues that may arise throughout the year. The ISU also represents figure skating on the International Olympic Committee, the governing body for the summer and winter Olympic Games.

To be involved in international figure skating competition, a country must be a member of the ISU and comply with the rules and regulations of that body. Similarly, to be involved in national skating competitions and the CFSA Test structures, skaters must belong to a club which is a members of the CFSA.

Each CFSA club must submit a Constitution and By-Laws to the national body for approval along with their application for membership. Each section also has a Constitution and By-Laws, which must be approved by the national Board of Directors, as well as any amendments which are made. The Alberta Section is required to have a constitution to incorporate under the Societies Act; incorporation is mandatory for most sections to be eligible to receive provincial grants. The Section's Constitution and By-Laws are superseded by the CFSA's Official Rulebook:

> If any present or future by-laws of the CFSA contradict any Section by-laws, the Executive shall change the Section by-laws to conform with those of the CFSA and until such time as the change is made by the executive the corresponding CFSA by-law will prevail. (Alberta/NWT Section Constitution and By-Laws, Article XI: c)

The Rulebook includes Association, Section, Region,[11] and club by-laws. Along with administrative rules and regulations, the Rulebook includes technical rules and rules for tests and competitions. The 1982 amended version contained over 300 pages and more than 400 rules which varied from a few lines to several pages in length. The present format of the Rulebook began in 1980 after the CFSA Rules Committee completely revised the preceding version. However, some form of rulebook per se, has existed since the early years of the Canadian Amateur Skating Association.

The rules of the CFSA are in turn superseded by those of the ISU. Rules regarding amateur status, tests and competitions are the primary ones of concern to the international body. Member countries of the ISU would be expected to vary as to their administrative structures, methods of developing athletes, coaches and national officials, and the various non-competitive programs that they might operate. Although the CFSA amendment rule that pertains to ISU rule changes, indicates a degree of discretion on the part of the Association, the indication derived from interviews and document analysis was that ISU rules are adopted with little hesitation.

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[11] The NWT and the Yukon are Regions, but attached to sections for purposes of administration and competition.

Aside from ISU changes, new CFSA rules are added and old ones deleted or amended by either of two methods. During even numbered years, amendments may be submitted by individual clubs to be voted on at the Annual Meeting. Sectional Committees and Association Committees may submit amendments for any Annual Meeting. Prior to 1980 when the Rulebook was completely revised,[19] the number of amendments put forward was quite high, especially in even numbered years. For example, in 1975 there were 28 and in 1976 there were 62 amendments voted on. Each year, the Association publishes new pages to insert in the Rulebook where changes have been made. The Rulebook is in the form of a three-ring, loose-leaf binder and each club receives one free copy. Everyone involved in skating, from skaters to parents to administrators, are encouraged to buy their own copy from the Association.

From the above description, there appears to be a well-defined hierarchy of authority for figure skating which begins at an international level with the ISU and ends at the local level with the individual club. As well, a number of non-figure skating bodies are situated in this hierarchy, such as the Olympic structure. The Alberta Section not only operates within a hierarchy of authority, but has a hierarchy within its own structure. All of the relationships in figure skating are precisely and elaborately defined by rules and regulations, as are most of the programs and activities of the sport.

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[19] One member of the Section Executive Committee pointed out that the 1980 Rules Committee was comprised mostly of lawyers and that much of the wording of the revised edition reflects that profession.

D. The Development of the Alberta Section

Over its fourteen year history, the Alberta Section experienced remarkable growth in two areas: membership and budget (see Figures 7 and 8). From 1969 to 1976, the number of clubs and individual members rose significantly year by year. At the time that this growth began to level off, a dramatic jump in Section revenues occurred. The Section's budget continued to expand at varying rates over the next seven years. Factors related to the two areas of growth are discussed below.

Figure 7: Growth of CFSA Clubs in the Alberta Section

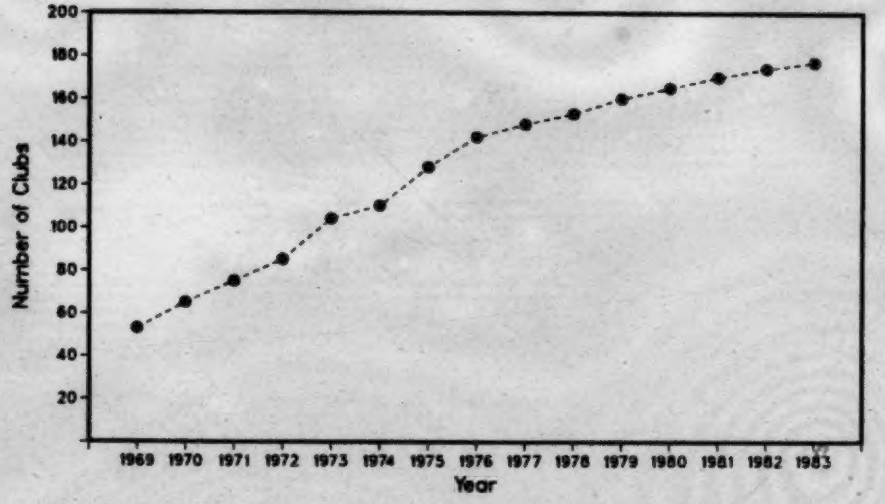
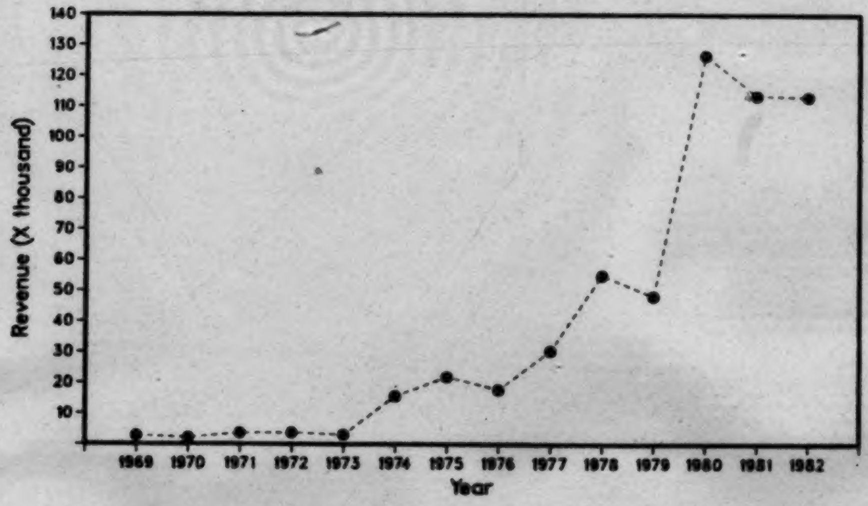


Figure 8: Revenue Growth of the Alberta Section



Membership Growth Years: 1969-1976

For the first eight years, the number of skaters and skating clubs in Alberta and the NWT rose steadily. Similar growth occurred across Canada. Several factors contributed to the increased participation in figure skating such as the population growth, economic prosperity, the building of more and better ice facilities, and the televising of major skating events.

A former member of the Alberta Section Executive Committee explained, "the first year we became a Section, we done [sic] a big selling job" (14:4). The Chairman and other executive members travelled throughout the province to promote the CFSA. Part of the Section's initial success is attributable to the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. The Federation had developed a skating program which they sold to many of the smaller centres in and around Edmonton. The Federation supplied instructors and would charge for their services.

> The drawbacks with the Federation was [sic] that they had their own rules, their tests were not comparable to the CFSA tests and the quality of instruction was very poor. They would take anybody on to instruct. Consequently, people jumped at the chance to become a CFSA club. (14:6)

As well, clubs were required to join the CFSA before their skaters could qualify to compete for the Canadian Championships. The Federation package was used throughout Edmonton, northern Alberta, and even the NWT. It was not used in the southern parts of the province. "This was probably the reason they didn't get as many clubs organized in the south because there was already a skeleton of clubs under this federation started [in the north]" (14:6).

A major factor related to the membership growth was the overall increase in Alberta's population. Between 1971 and 1981, Alberta's population increased by 37.4% as compared to the total Canadian population increase of 12.9% (Government of Alberta, 1982, p. xxii). Table 1 summarizes Alberta's population growth since 1946, including the breakdown for children under the age of 15.

Table 1
Population Growth for the
Province of Alberta: 1946-1981[1]

Year	Total Pop. (X 1,000)	Pop. Under 15 Yrs.
1946	803.4	
1951	939.5	
1956	1,123.1	
1961	1,332.0	
1966	1,463.2	
1971	1,627.9	514.5
1976	1,838.0	503.2
1977	1,911.0	507.6
1978	1,984.0	510.7
1979	2,059.0	515.0
1980	2,143.0	525.8
1981	2,237.3	541.6

[1]Source: Government of Alberta, 1982.

During the formative years of the Alberta Section, the volunteer Executive Committee operated on a small budget. In fact, the year that it was a region, 1968, there was no official budget and an executive member provided nearly three hundred dollars of his own money to cover expenses. The following year the CFSA began providing grants. These funds covered costs associated with executive correspondance and meetings, and some officials' development. The Section was also successful in obtaining some provincial grant funds.[20]

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[20] Unfortunately, much of the documentation regarding early budgets of the Section has been lost. Like many organizations run by volunteers, the early records of the Section were passed from old to new executive members in a haphazard fashion. In 1979, the Section began collecting these materials and depositing them in the provincial archives.

Although the Alberta Section's operating budget was small, the general economy was improving and this affected figure skating. The economic health of the province, in particular the personal income of Albertans, influenced the sport's continued rise in popularity. Skating is an expensive sport. The three major cost items which are paid for by the participant are: ice time, coaching fees and equipment. For the more skilled skater, test and competition (travel, costumes, music, accomodation) costs, and higher base costs as a consequence of skating more hours per week and weeks per year, make skating a sport for the middle to upper classes. Since 1973, the per capita personal income of Alberta has exceeded the Canadian average, and between 1976 and 1981, Alberta's total personal income has more than doubled (Government of Alberta, 1982, p. xxii).

Facilities are another factor linked to the growth of skating clubs. Arenas provide a safer, more centralized location for skating activities to occur than had frozen ponds and rivers. As aptly noted by one executive member, "I don't think too many kids would be skating at the competitive level if they had to do it all outdoors" (2:18).

Unfortunately, there is no inventory of arenas built in Alberta during the past 15 years. Bill Casey, an employee in the Provincial Department of Recreation and Parks, estimated that there were 160 artificial ice arenas in Alberta in 1975 and 200 by 1984. Don Naffon, also with the Department, estimated that there are 50 natural ice arenas in Alberta in 1984 with the majority of these located in rural, northern communities that cannot afford artificial facilities. Provincial government capital grants spent on the construction of sport and recreation facilities between 1970 and 1979 are shown in Table 2. These figures provide some indication of the overall growth in facilities in Alberta.

Table 2
Provincial Government Operating and Capital Grants
for Alberta Sport and Recreation Associations: 1970-1979[1]

Year	Operating Grants	Percent Change	Capital Grants[2]
1970-71	15,500		51,266
1971-72	40,500	+161.3	212,605
1972-73	80,952	+ 99.9	1,000,000
1973-74	392,800	+385.2	3,498,000
1974-75	403,100	+ 2.6	6,267,185
1975-76	401,100	- 0.5	18,474,935
1976-77	1,198,140	+198.7	15,939,778
1977-78	1,790,200	+ 49.4	23,256,563
1978-79			22,838,631

[1] Source: Broom and Baka, 1978, pp. 53-56.
[2] Includes grants for the 1975 Canada Games and the 1978 Commonwealth Games.

The distinction between natural and artificial ice is an important one and may be another reason for the slower growth of clubs in southern Alberta during the early 70's. In an excerpt from the Southern Zone Director's 1974-75 annual report, several problems related to climactic conditions were identified:

> Weather conditions in Southern Alberta during the months of October, November and December, were exceptionally mild and consequently many of the small clubs depending on natural ice did not commence skating until late November or early December. If normal weather conditions prevail in the first quarter of the year many of these rinks will lose their ice before the end of March and thus having a winter skating season of some 3 to 4 months which is not condusive to the production and advancement of the skater. This short season also has a direct bearing insofar as these clubs obtaining Professionals....Obtaining Professionals for the smaller clubs appears to be a major problem due to the size of the club, distances involved, ice time available and in many instances, the reduced skating season due to climatic conditions.

For many southern communities, the construction of an artificial ice surface made it more advantageous to join the CFSA than when the ice was natural and the skating season was at the mercy of the weather.

Finally, the growth of figure skating can in part be attributed to the public's exposure to the sport via television. B.P. explained how television exposure over the past 10 years has affected figure skating:

> TV exposure was the big thing, like hockey and all the other sports, there were always choices to be made about what your children will [sic] go into, and once they go into the sport then the odd individual catches on and likes it...but on the local scene, I think it's the TV that has exposed the people to figure skating. (9:2)

Although membership growth leveled off after 1975, the Section has continued to increase its club membership gradually. Each year, four to five new clubs are formed, but this rise is somewhat offset by the one or two clubs that go inactive or fold each year. Clubs in smaller communities that were run by a strong individual, may fold when that person leaves. Other clubs go inactive because the local ice facility is lost in a fire or becomes otherwise inoperable. Nevertheless, the strong growth in membership during the first seven years of the Section's existence established figure skating as one of the largest amateur sport organizations in the province of Alberta.

Hall's (1982) concept of the general environment was used to analyze the environment of the Alberta Section. It is evident that several external conditions influenced the early development of the Alberta Section. The membership growth experienced by the Section can be related to demographic changes in the province. The Section's potential "market" expanded as a result of the rapid population growth during the early seventies. That the Section realized a share of this market as it were, relates in part to the economic prosperity of the times. Skating is an expensive sport in which to participate and the rise in personal incomes throughout the province made skating more affordable.

Also important to the development of the Alberta Section was the increased number of ice arenas. In comparison to some other sport and leisure activities, figure skating is dependent upon specialized facilities. Clubs tend to form around centralized facilities and as the number of arenas increased in Alberta, the number of clubs also increased. Facilities could be seen to represent a technological influence, except that the expertise already existed; what was missing was a favourable economic situation.

Ecological conditions represented a negative factor for figure skating. The experiences of clubs in southern Alberta showed how vulnerable natural ice clubs were to changes in the weather. The economic situation not only allowed more facilities to be built, but better ones that had artificial ice-making capacity. The increase in artificial ice surfaces was important to the development of strong and enduring skating programs throughout the Section. In the central and northern parts of the province and territory, where temperatures are colder for longer periods of time, climactic conditions did not affect natural ice users as much. However, with artificial surfaces, a club could count on good ice being available throughout the season and even during what had traditionally been the off-season months from April to October.

Another aspect of ecology is geography. Travel distances were a factor in the initial formation of the Section. Transportation costs to major competitions were reduced by the division of the Prairie Section with each section holding its own championship. The ability level of skaters in Alberta must also have benefited from competitions being more affordable, although this would be difficult to verify. Similarly, communication and travel costs related to Executive Committee meetings and administration of programs were reduced by the new structure. However, being the largest geographic section in Canada, Alberta's travel and communication costs continued to be a limiting factor. For example, the Section's 1972-73 Annual Report concluded that limited funds were restricting the Executive Committee to two meetings per year.

Initially, the economic growth of the seventies did not affect the size of the Section's budget. However, the economic conditions that contributed to a large membership base and an established program, put the Section into an excellent position to benefit from changes in the political climate during the seventies, a time in which all levels of government began to give moral and financial support to organized physical activity and recreational use of leisure time. Increased federal funding to the national Association indirectly affected the Section through the development of programs such as the National Skating Test Program for beginning skaters.

Provincial and municipal support support at the local level in regards to facility development also affected the Section's growth. Direct financial support from the province to the Alberta Section was small to begin with, but became quite significant by mid-decade. These and other changes in the economic environment of the Section are discussed below.

Revenue Growth Period: 1975-1981

Membership growth began to level off after 1975. Although the number of clubs in Alberta continued to increase, there was an 8.9% decrease in individual members during the 1976-77 season.[21] The situation in Alberta was a reflection of the rest of Canada; there was a 3.8% increase in CFSA clubs, but the number of members actually decreased by 11%. In the Association's Executive Director's annual report for 1976-77, he noted:

> The reasons for this decrease are probably many, one of them being the increase in 1976 Registration fees. Another may be a proportional decrease in the numbers of youth in our population, which is being felt by our school systems and other mass participation Canadian sports, such as amateur hockey.

The registration fee increased from one to three dollars. The registration fee is in addition to what skaters pay to their own club for ice time and coaching fees and is sent by the clubs to the national Association. The fee increase may have affected some skaters, but second point regarding the declining proportion of youths is probably more relevant. The decrease in youth population in Alberta between 1976 and 1978 is shown in Table 1.

Although Alberta experienced a slight drop in membership, the number of clubs continued to grow but at a slower rate. From 1971 to 1977, there was a 74.1% increase in clubs. Over the next seven years, this decelerated to a 19.6% increase. Individual memberships peaked during 1975-76 and have remained around 14,000 since that time. As the membership growth period ended, a new growth era had already begun for the Alberta Section. Between 1974 and 1975 the Section's income jumped 421.1% (see Table 3). A major factor related to this increase was the changing political climate.

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[21] The skating year extends from November 1st to October 31st. The Winter Season is from November 1st to March 31st and is the period during which the majority of skating clubs operate.

Table 3
The Alberta Section's Total Income and a Comparison of Major Funding Sources: 1969-1983

	Funding Source			
Year	Total Income ($)	Registration Refund	Other CFSA Grants	Prov'l Gov't Grants
1969-70	2,730		1,000 (36.7)[2]	1,000 (36.7)[2]
1970-71	DNA		2,780	DNA
1971-72	3,532		DNA	DNA
1972-73	3,580 (+1.4)[1]		DNA	DNA
1973-74	2,978 (-16.8)		2,500 (83.9)	478 (16.1)
1974-75	15,519 (+421.1)		5,065 (32.6)	7,500 (48.3)
1975-76	21,800 (+40.5)		6,750 (31.0)	11,000 (50.5)
1976-77	17,691 (-18.8)	5,961 (33.7)[2]	4,262 (24.1)	6,225 (35.2)
1977-78	30,316 (+71.3)	15,528 (51.2)	6727 (22.2)	5,545 (18.3)
1978-79	54,897 (+181.1)	20,022 (36.5)	2,000 (3.6)	20,000 (36.4)
1979-80	48,099 (-12.4)	16,296 (33.9)	3,500 (7.3)	25,000 (52.0)
1980-81	126,696 (+263.4)	37,016 (29.2)	7,500 (5.9)	66,974 (52.9)
1981-82	113,455 (-10.5)	41,650 (36.7)	7,103 (6.3)	40,952 (36.1)
1982-83	113,193 (- 0.2)	38,875 (34.3)	2,064 (1.8)	51,639 (45.6)

[1] (percent change relative to previous year)

[2] (percent of total income)

DNA Data Not Available

The Federal government's involvement in amateur sport began in 1961 with the enactment of Bill C-131, "An Act to Encourage Fitness and Amateur Sport." The act committed the federal government to encouraging mass participation and improving international sport performance. Although the programs established and financed by this act were not large, it did form a basis for continued government support and funding. One feature of the act was the creation of federal-provincial cost-sharing agreements. The agreements helped to stimulate the provinces' role in supporting amateur sport. Unfortunately, as suggested by Broom and Baka (1978), the federal government's termination of the program in 1970, caused antagonisms between the two levels of government manifested by lack of cooperation and coordination.

A campaign promise by the soon to be elected Prime Minister Trudeau, was fulfilled in 1968 with the appointment of a task force to investigate amateur sport in Canada. The "Task Force Report" was followed by a commissioned study that provided data on various aspects of sport and fitness. Subsequently, a paper entitled "A Proposed Sports Policy for Canadians" was released by the federal government Ministry of Health and Welfare. The emphasis of the proposed new policy was on the development of elite athletes "as a consequence and not a goal of mass participation" (1970, p. 23). Some of the important projects that resulted from the new policy included the establishment of a new government agency, Sport Canada, and two 'arms-length' organizations, the National Sport and Recreation Centre and the Coaching Association of Canada. (Other agencies and organizations relating to recreation and mass participation were also created.) The awarding of the 1976 Summer Olympic Games to Montreal in 1970, prompted the federal government to play an even greater role. In a short-term effort to significantly improve Canada's performance at the Olympics, the program "Game Plan '76" was launched. Unprecedented funds were poured into such things as talent identification, living and training support for elite athletes, expanding competitive opportunities and improving the level of technical expertise among the coaching ranks.

Across Canada, the role of provincial governments' in amateur sport expanded significantly during the 70's. Broom and Baka (1978) described the changing stature of sport as follows:

> The fact that provincial sport agencies usually grew out of and remained affiliated with a larger, more encompassing recreation structure stemmed mainly from the traditional community recreation approach of assisting sport which most provinces adopted in earlier years. As the sport units developed, they gradually assumed a more important status within their recreation bureaucracies and together these two concurrent areas came to occupy increasingly important positions in overall provincial government bureaucracy. (pp. 48-49)

In Alberta, the "Recreation Development Act" was passed in 1968 and provided for the expansion of sport services with grant programs. The formation of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife[22] in 1976, was a major step toward the consolidation of provincial sport services.

Broom and Baka (1978) noted that the traditional funding priority for provincial assistance was sport leadership, which included coaches' and officials' clinics, workshops and conferences. With increased sport services budgets, program funding expanded into other areas such as the hiring of coaches and administrators, travel assistance, hosting grants for major competitions, capital grants for facility construction and subsidized administrative centres. Table 3 shows the tremendous growth in provincial grants to Alberta sport governing bodies during the 70's.

Although the CFSA benefited from the increased federal support of sport, it was not financially dependent upon the government. The CFSA is somewhat unique in amateur sport in its ability for financial self-support. The Association has always earned the largest portion of its revenues through the fee system. Fees for registration, tests, off-season schools, club membership and sanctions, all return a significant amount of money to the national body annually. The second major source of funding has been the sale of notions such as pins, badges and records. Federal government support for particular projects aimed at developing world-class athletes has been the Association's third source of revenue. The profits from the

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[22] It is now called Recreation and Parks, with Wildlife having moved to another department.

CFSA sponsored competitions have been a further source of income as have revenues from the sale of television rights for the broadcasting of these events.

The increased federal involvement in sport throughout the seventies did result in the CFSA receiving more financial and administrative support. However, unlike many national sport governing bodies, the CFSA has managed to maintain a high level of self-financing. At the height of the federal government's pre-Olympic "booster" program, the President of the CFSA made the following report at the 1975 AGM:

> You will note, from reference to the Income statement in the financial report, to which I will refer later, that the Association has received substantial funds from the Federal government and Game Plan '76. We should acknowledge with appreciation this special type of assistance, but at the same time, I must also caution members that in my judgement, it is essential to ensure that this Association maintain its position of independence from government influence over the conduct of its operations. This can only be done by ensuring that the major portion of Association revenues are raised independently. I am only too well aware of many amateur sports which do not have that flexibility to manage their own affairs because the purse strings are outside their control.

Since 1969, the CFSA allocated funds to all the sections in the form of grants. The two main grants allocated annually were the Section Administration Grant and the Section Regional Development Grant. The funds granted were fairly similar across Canada, with slightly larger amounts for sections with more members. CFSA funds were also allocated to cover such things as competition losses and matching staff grants, but these were not granted automatically.

In 1974-75, the amount of the CFSA grants to the Alberta Section doubled. As well, the Section received four different provincial grants. However, as with many granting systems, the funds allocated by both the government and the CFSA were earmarked for specific projects and did not represent any significant increase in "play money". For example, the CFSA granted funds to cover losses accrued in holding the Sectional Championships. The provincial government granted funds for competitors' travel, office equipment and money to off-set the cost of an administrators' workshop. The three remaining grants, Administration, Regional Development and a provincial Leadership grant, were somewhat more flexible, but as their names suggest, their useage was limited to certain areas.

A comparison of expenditures before and after this first rise in revenue showed that the Section's competitive program benefited most by the increase. Over 43% of the 1974-75 budget was used for the staging of competitions and for competitors' travel expenses. Basic operating costs, i.e., telephone, printing, postage, supplies and meeting expenses, were also increased substantively.

The second major budget shift for the Alberta Section occurred in 1977-78 when revenues increased 181.1% largely as a result of new funding from the CFSA. In 1977, there was an increase in registration fees. This was part of a new formula whereby sections were returned a portion of the fees collected from members within their jurisidiction. The original formula allowed for each section to receive 30% of fees collected from their area.

Aside from the advantage of providing greater income to the sections, the refund system could represent some degree of financial autonomy from the national body. However, the registration refund is categorized as CFSA funding in the Alberta Section's financial statement which it is required to submit to the national Association. Even so, the refund system seems to be a relatively stable source of income. The system was put in place by the general membership of the Association and therefore, can only be repealed by that membership. That the general membership would reverse a system returning funds collected from section members to the section, is unlikely. Thus, the refund system represents a fairly stable and significant income for the sections, even if it they continue to be financially dependent upon the Assocation. It also acts as an incentive for each section to maintain or increase memberships within its jurisdiction. Further, it does not penalize one section when another suffers large drops in enrollment.

The registration refund system began in the Fall of 1976. However, the registration year was from January 1 to December 31, and sections received only a part of that year's fees. This amounted to just over $4,000 for Alberta. The following year Alberta was returned over $15,000; an amount that accounted for more than half of the Section's income.

One of the major projects this revenue growth enabled the Section to undertake was the hiring of an administrator. In comparison with other sections, Alberta was slow to institute a paid administrative position. By 1975, every section except PEI and Alberta had hired at least one employee on a part or full-time basis. The Section has had an office in the Percy Page Centre, St. Albert, since 1973. (The provincial government rents office space in the Centre to provincial recreation and sport associations for one dollar per year. Printing and mailing services are also subsidized.)

The CFSA encouraged the Section to hire someone and granted $2,000 for that purpose in 1975. However, the Section could not match those funds and the money was carried over to the next year's budget. Aside from financial constraints, there may have been resistance on the part of some Section members to the idea of a paid administrator. A letter addressed to the Section Chairman in late 1974, highlighted the concerns of one executive member:

> Although it [a paid administrative position] has some merit I do not think the section is ready for it at this time. Think it would hurt the prospects of getting any volunteer help. Where would we draw the line for those who receive pay and those who don't?

In February 1977, with the first installment of the registration refund, the Section was in the financial position to hire a part-time Executive Secretary.[23] A Skaters' Development program was also started in 1977 for the purpose of identifying and developing competitive skaters in Alberta and the NWT. One of the major purposes of the program continues to be the hosting of an intensive skating seminar each summer for the best competitive skaters. Since 1979, the Skaters' Development program has cost the Section between ten and twenty thousand dollars annually.[24]

The third stage in the Section's revenue growth period occurred in 1978 when the provincial government implemented a new grant system. That year the Section received $20,000. The system, which is still in place, requires the completion of an organizational "profile" each year. The profile includes a detailed three year plan for the Section, budget projections and a comprehensive report of the previous year's activities.[25] Funds are provided to assist in three areas: administration, leadership development and program development. Specific percentages of the total grant are allocated to each area.

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[23] This position was renamed "Executive Director" in 1981.

[24] An additional source of funding for the skating seminar has been the "Alberta Bursury Fund" (later changed to the Alberta Figure Skating Foundation) which was set up in 1975 as a separate organization to encourage the development of figure skating in the province.

The first year of the profile, the Section did not receive any other provincial funds; however, the Section has since been successful at securing additional provincial grants. As well, the amount of the profile grant has increased annually.

With increases in funding available from both national and provincial sources, the Section was able to expand its programs. The Section's improved financial situation allowed for increased expenditures on executive and committee travel and meetings, with each member being alloted a specific budget. The Executive Committee was now meeting five times a year. The elite athlete in Alberta also benefited in terms of travel support to out-of-province competitions and skating clinics.

The increased budget enabled the Executive Secretary's position to become full-time in May 1980 and a second part-time staff member was hired. As described in the 1979-80 Annual Report, the workload had increased as a result of the Executive Committee's decision to handle financial affairs through the Section office:

> This [change] has been instituted due to the heavy commitment being placed on the volunteer and the further increased necessity for records [sic] keeping which has resulted from our financial support from the Province. The office staff will be increased by another part time person that [sic] will be primarily involved in the book-keeping duties under the direction of the Treasurer. It is foreseen this will afford us better financial control of accounts and also not necessitate the movement of funds and accounts every time a new Treasurer is elected.

The final stage of revenue growth occurred in 1980 when the Section's total income tripled over the previous year. A detailed comparison of the Section's funding sources from

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[25] That the profile requires the Section to develop a three-year plan is possibly as important as the resultant funding. To develop their long range plan, the Section executive held a weekend planning seminar in 1979 conducted by a professor from the University of Alberta's Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation. A clinic was also held in 1982 (see Appendix B). Lack of long range plans is a major problem with many volunteer sport organizations and one the province recognized when developing the application procedure for the new grant structure.

1980 to 1983 is shown in Table 4. One reason for the increase was that 50% of the registration fees were returned to each section instead of the previous 30%. There was also a rise in the fees charged. The second reason for the increase was the level of provincial funding. The provincial grants totalled over sixty-six thousand in 1980-81. This amount included a grant of more than twenty-five thousand as part of the province's 75th Anniversary Celebrations. These monies were put toward two projects, approved by the granting agency, that otherwise would not have taken place. One project, Athletes on Tour, sent elite figure skaters to outlying areas to conduct clinics and perform exhibitions. Thus, the Section should not have been negatively effected the following year when these funds were not available by having built ongoing projects or expectations into their budget.

Along with an improved financial situation, the Alberta Section began to improve its competitive performance in comparison to other sections. The section had its best results ever at the Canadian Championships in 1980 with eleven competitors participating and four first place finishes. In part, the success of Albertan skaters relates to the Section's Skaters' Development program and the summer seminars for elite competitive skaters which began in 1977.

The period of significant revenue growth ended after the 1980-81 fiscal year. The general economy of Canada had been gradually declining with inflation and high interest rates. As a province, Alberta had managed to avoid many of the early affects of the recession and had continued to grow economically into the eighties. Since 1977, the Alberta Section had been building up a surplus fund and investing it in term deposits. Entering the 1981-82 fiscal year, these extra funds amounted to $30,774. The Section's decision to maintain a surplus to off-set possible losses in the future showed great foresight as the first of three successive deficit budgets began in 1981-82. The minutes from the 1982 AGM noted that "the major expense accounting for the large deficit was the leadership conference held in September 1981--Skate In".

Table 4
A Comparison of All Funding Sources
for the Alberta Section: 1980-1983

Source	1980-81 Funds ($)	1981-82 Funds ($)	1982-83 Funds ($)
CFSA:	(44,516)[1]	(48,753)	(40,939)
a) Registration Refund	37,016	41,650	38,875
b) NST Grant	500	500	1,000
c) Staff Grant	7,000		
d) NCCP Grant		6,603	1,064
Provincial Government:	(66,974)[1]	(40,952)	(51,639)
a) Profile Grant	27,910	32,670	35,700
b) Sport Alberta Grant	2,612	2,612	3,000
c) Alberta Athlete Development Grant	8,580	2,970	4,500
d) International Coach Grant	2,700	2,700	
e) 75th Anniversary Grant	25,172		
f) Winter Games Grant			7,200
g) Sport Outreach Grant			650
h) Planning Seminar Grant			589
Other:	(15,206)[1]	(23,751)	(20,615)
a) Notion Sales/Subscriptions	2,319	5,359	4,803
b) Interest/Miscellaneous	5,887	8,868	4,583
c) Bursury Fund Grant	7,000		
d) Registration/Clinic Fees		9,524	3,029
e) Bingo			8,200
Total	$126,696	$113,455	$113,193

[1] (sub-total)

The following year, the Treasurer's report at the Section's AGM began: "as the economy of the country has deteriorated over the past year, so has the financial situation of the Alberta Section of the CFSA." A number of "unforseen expenses" and the expected deficit depleted the Section's surplus funds, presenting a gloomy financial picture for the upcoming 1983-84 season. In an effort to regain some financial ground, the Section's Executive Committee undertook a number of saving measures by cutting operating costs, curtailing the introduction of any new programs and developing alternative sources of funding. For the first time in 1982-83, the Section had become involved in fund raising by holding two Bingos. Further fund raising Bingos and a Casino were planned for the future. In addition, the Section planned to apply for provincial government grants which had not been utilized thus far. A

Finance Committee was also established to advise on the financial situation and its affect on the Section, as well as being responsible for investigating new sources of funding. The Section Executive Committee also placed responsibility onto the clubs to assist in improving the financial situation. In particular, the Treasurer's report noted that some clubs neglected to register all their skaters[24] or members of their club executive, thus denying the Section funds via the registration payback system. Clubs were also encouraged to purchase supplies from the Section Office instead of the CFSA Office. Finally, clubs were told that the provincial government "wants to know everything that happens in our sport throughout the province" to determine the amount of the Profile Grant the Section should receive. Thus, clubs were asked to notify the Section Office regarding all programs they offered.

The success of the Alberta Section in handling its new financial situation, depends upon a number of factors. In his speech at the 1982 AGM, CFSA President David Dore suggested that a declining birth rate and an unsteady economy were two problems the Association needed to address. Together, these two factors threaten the CFSA's membership size. Nationally, individual membership declined four percent in 1982-83. The Alberta Section only lost 28 members, but other sections suffered large drops in enrollment. A member of the Executive Committee reported that B.C. lost 2,000 skaters, Quebec lost 1,200 and the four Ontario sections lost 2,100 skaters (1:13). However, these losses also affect the Alberta Section in that the national Association's total revenues decrease with decreases in registration.

Even though the Alberta Section's enrollment has not been severely affected as yet, one executive member noted that the declining economy meant skaters were taking fewer lessons and not going to off-season schools as much. Both of these measures could affect the financial viability of skating clubs. Skating clubs are non-profit and their major cost is ice time (except for a small number of private clubs which own their own facilities). The cost of ice rental is the same whether one or fifty skaters are on the ice. Thus, as skaters begin to drop out or cut-back in the number of ice times they register for, the fees will increase for the rest of the skaters. A club can cut-back on total ice time, but only to a certain extent before it is no longer able to offer a program of high quality.

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[24] The beginning skater in a club is usually involved in the National Skating Test program (described later), and these are the skaters many clubs neglect to register.

Figure skating clubs, and their membership, are the basis for the Section's funding from the CFSA. Similarly, the provincial government's Profile Grant is largely based upon membership size, program activity and service level of the Section. Therefore, if the Section's membership declines to any great extent, both of these major sources of funding would be negatively affected. The Section is in a predicament since the majority of funding depends on membership numbers and that is one area in which neither the Section nor the clubs have much control. Seeking alternative sources of funding, particularly sources that are independent of any external control, is mandatory for the Section.

In summary, the Alberta Section's revenue growth period was influenced by certain external conditions, namely the political and economic situation. Federal and provincial government involvement in supporting the development of amateur sport provided indirect and direct funding to the Section. Broom and Baka (1978) noted that in 1978, federal and provincial Ministers responsible for sport, fitness and recreation agreed to the following: "the federal government has the responsiblity for the development of high performance athletes and sport at national and international levels, and that the provincial governments have primary responsibility for recreation" (p. 46). The Alberta Section and the CFSA are well suited to both of these mandates. As will be described, the Association, operating through each Section, offers a broad range of programs for skaters, coaches and officials from the grass roots level to the elite level of international competition. The majority of skaters in Canada are recreational skaters enrolled in a "learn to" program. Only about 100 of the over 160,000 skaters registered with the CFSA are considered to be elite, international competitors. Even though Canada's performance at an international level went through a period of decline between 1972 and 1983, Canadian figure skaters have produced more medal performances than any other sport at the Winter Olympics. Thus, the CFSA's large membership and broad program put each section in a good position to benefit from the provincial governments' commitment to recreational/service organizations and the relatively strong competitive record of Canada's elite figure skaters, put the Association in a good position to benefit from the federal government's commitment to international level sport.

The present period of economic distress poses a potential threat to both the Alberta Section and the CFSA. The Section's main concern should be declining memberships and the impact of the economy on program activity. The rising costs related to competitive skating, for example, coaching, equipment, ice and travel, could deter future national champions from pursuing the sport and affect the CFSA's position in international competition. In turn, the two scenarios of declining enrollment and decreased international stature, could affect levels of provincial and federal funding to figure skating, thus creating a vicious circle.

The importance of recognizing and examining the broader external context in which an organization exists, has been particularly relevant to understanding the development of the Alberta Section over its 14 year history. Clearly two environmental conditions, the economy and political climate, had the greatest influence on the Section and the Association in general. However, several other factors identified by Hall (1982) were also important to varying degrees including ecology, demography and technology.

E. The Objects and Programs of the Alberta Section and the CFSA

In order to understand the structure and environment of the Alberta Section, it is necessary to know something about its purpose. Simply stated, what does the Alberta Section do? The Section appears to function very much in the manner of a service organization whose business is to promote the development of figure skating in the province. According to the Constitution and By-Laws, the objects of the Alberta Section are as follows:

a. To improve, encourage and advance figure skating on ice in all its branches by amateurs.

b. To publish and disseminate information concerning figure skating.

c. To authorize the holding of competitions and meets and to prescribe rules and regulations and appoint referees, judges and other officials therefore.

d. To co-operate with other Sections of the CFSA and any other organizations or persons for the furtherance of the objects.

e. To generally take all steps necessary to govern and administer figure skating on ice, by amateurs within the Section in accordance with the Constitution, By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the CFSA.

In meeting these objects, the Alberta Section is involved in a number of programs which can be divided into five groups as follows:

1. Tests
2. Competitions
3. Skater Development
4. Leadership Training
5. Communications

These same programs are available to skaters throughout Canada and within each program area there is a wide range of specific activities. The extent to which the Alberta Section is involved in developing and implementing each of these activities varies significantly.

Tests

Tests encompass two different programs: National Skating Tests (NST) and CFSA Tests. The NST program[17] is for the beginning skater and is a "learn-to" program "designed to teach the basic moves which are required of the sport, be it figure skating, hockey or any form of pleasure skating" (4700). The program was first developed in 1964 with the financial assistance of the federal government.

The program is comprised of 22 tests. Eight of these are grouped into a "Basic Power Skating" program. This series is specifically designed for beginners in skating who wish to go on to the games of ice hockey or ringette. The content of the tests progressively builds on the fundemental skills and is the basis for the instructional portion of the program. Skaters are not required to try the tests in any specific order and the Association does not keep records of test results. As described in the NST Amateur Coaches' Manual, "the standard of proficiency for the tests is intentionally kept to a minimum which requires that the elements be skated with "reasonable" ease, balance and control and indicate the result of practice." NST tests are examined by amateur or professional coaches (discussed below) and it is up to the individual club when they will hold a test day.

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[17] In 1983-84 this program was revised and renamed CanSkate and CanFigure Skate. The essential purpose of the program, to teach basic skating skills, remained intact.

The NST program is open to anyone who wishes to adopt it and does not require membership in the CFSA.[11] In fact, the power skating portion is aimed at a significant group of non-members, minor hockey players. Minutes from the CFSA NST Committee predicted that the CFSA's role in teaching hockey players would increase:

> The net result of the discussion with the CAHA [Canadian Amateur Hockey Association] is that they would like to continue dialogue to possibly co-develop or endorse a program we produce. They figured, that there's a large market and that neither association is doing the job. At one point it will be nessary to join forces: they have the market, we have the expertise. (13:14-15)

The majority of registered skaters in Canada are NST skaters. Indeed, for the majority of CFSA clubs, NST is the largest offering of their skating program, if not the only offering. An estimated 75% of registered CFSA skaters are in the NST program and this does not include non-CFSA members enrolled in skating programs that use the NST package. Skating terminology exemplifies this further in that member clubs are often referred to as either CFSA or NST clubs, to indicate the major focus of their programs.

The second program to fall under the heading of tests is CFSA Tests. The CFSA Test program is for the more skillful participant. A skater usually takes part in the NST program before progressing to the tests of the CFSA. A survey conducted by the CFSA in 1978, estimated that a third of NST skaters continue in the CFSA Test system (Parkinson and Keohane, 1978, p. 39).

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[11] This means that another organization or institution such as the public school system may use the program without registering as a "club". However, a club that is registered with the CFSA must register all of its skaters with the Association even if the skaters are in an NST program.

There are five categories of CFSA Tests: figures, free skate, pairs, dance and competition. Within each category there are several individual tests which must be tried in succession e.g., a candidate for a test must pass all preceding tests in the same category. There are nine figure tests, six free skate, four pair tests, and nine categories of one to five dance tests. The competitive tests, which combine free skate and figures, comprise three tests. Altogether there are 40 CFSA Tests.

The CFSA Test program is restricted to members of the Association. These tests can only be tested by CFSA Judges holding appropriate qualifications. A panel of three Judges is usually required for testing, but changes have been made to permit single panel judging in certain situations because of a shortage of judges in many areas. There are many rules prescribing the conduct of tests and extensive records are kept by the Association. Sections are allowed to develop local policies and rules concerning the scheduling of CFSA tests. This is a result of a severe shortage of judges in many parts of the country. Previously, clubs could arrange test days, contact judges and schedule the dates on their own. As the number of judges declined and the number of skaters trying tests increased,[11] this system created many problems. In particular, clubs in outlying areas had trouble getting judges. The Alberta Section instituted a policy whereby tests higher than the level of Fifth Figure, Bronze Free Skate or Dance, came under the jurisdiction of the Section Judges Chairman. The Judges Chairman schedules the tests in centralized locations and arranges for judges. Lower level CFSA tests continue to be arranged at the club level.

Whereas the level of proficiency for tests in the NST program is kept to a minimum, the standards for CFSA Tests are high. In part, this is shown by the consistently high failure rate. Of 12,787 CFSA Tests tried in Alberta in 1982-83, only 59% were passed. Many of those tests passed were retakes of previous failures. The Alberta Section's pass-fail rate is similar to the national average.

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[11] In Alberta, the number of tests tried is typically over 10,000 and the number of judges is around 400.

The CFSA Test program was significantly altered in 1977 with the introduction of a competitive test stream. The primary purpose was to provide potentially gifted competitors the opportunity to "learn and perfect more complex figures at an earlier age" and to permit the test skater "to progress through the eight figure tests and five free skating tests without having to compete" (Taylor, 1977, p. 6).[30] The goal of the new system is enhance the performance of Canada's best skaters in the international arena. The theory behind the new test structure is that "streaming should give the competitive skaters a boost of confidence in figures, the traditional Canadian stumbling block, because the more complex competition figures will be taught at an earlier age" (McCabe, 1978, p. 29). Skaters in the national competitive structure discussed below, must be in the competitive stream.

There are three test levels in figure skating, each representing a particular program and orientation to the sport (see Figure 9). The first level is the NST "learn-to" program. The second and third levels involve CFSA Tests for the more skilled skater; the former appeal to non-competitors and the latter are aimed at developing international champions. The number of skaters decreases at each successive level. A pyramid analogy can be employed to describe the organization. The base of the pyramid comprises the largest constituency, NST skaters. At the completion of the NST program, or earlier, skaters progress to the middle level which includes CFSA Tests. Part way through the CFSA Tests program the skater must decide whether she/he will remain in the non-competitive test stream or progress to the competitive stream. The relatively small group of skaters at the apex of the pyramid include the individuals who perform in the Novice, Junior and Senior Skating categories at the various championship competitions leading to the Canadian Championships and ultimately, the World Championships.

The preceding documentation is critical for understanding much of what goes on in figure skating. The testing programs, together with their instructional content, are the major means by which the Alberta Section and the CFSA fulfill their objectives. The other four programs, competitions, skater development, leadership training and communication, are interrelated with, and in some instances, contingent upon, the structure of the test programs.

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[30] The discrepency between the number of tests in each category as noted by Taylor and that which was described on page 75, is due to changes in the system since 1977.

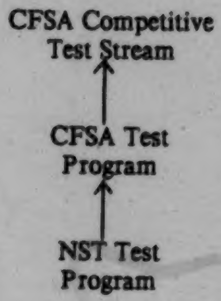

Figure 9: The Test Structure in Canadian Figure Skating

Competitions

There are six types of competition. The first is the club competition and only members of the host club are eligible to participate. Except for rules regarding amateur status and the determination of placings, clubs are allowed a great deal of discretion in the format of their competition. The club competition is the only type not required to use CFSA officials and not requiring official approval from the Association.

The second type, the inter-club competition, is open to competitors from more than one club. It must be sanctionned and use CFSA officials, but the format of events is up to the clubs. Generally, both club and inter-club competitions involve free skate and/or dance events and eligibility categories are based on the CFSA test level of the skater. Recently, however, NST competitions have become popular.

The Canada Winter Games and the Alberta Winter Games are two sport events in which figure skating competitions of the inter-club variety are included. The national Winter Games are held every four years and are a major sport festival for athletes from all provinces and territories in a multitude of sports. Sport Canada stages the Canada Games, but the CFSA is involved in the structuring and operation of the figure skating portion. Qualifying rounds are organized within the various provinces with assistance from each section.

The Alberta Winter Games are also a multi-sport festival held every second year. The Department of Recreation and Parks sponsors the Alberta Games, but the Section is involved in the organization of the figure skating portion to ensure the competition is run according to CFSA regulations. Regional competitions are held to qualify skaters from various parts of the Province. Skaters in the NWT are involved in Arctic Winter Games, which are similar to Alberta Winter Games.

The Alberta Section also organizes an inter-club competition called "Winterskate". The Section initiated Winterskate for skaters who were not at the competitive level of Sectionals, the first competition in the Canadian Championship structure. Regional run-offs are held in the north and south to qualify skaters for the annual Winterskate competition. Another important feature of Winterskate is that it is scheduled for later in the season to enable rural club skaters sufficient time to prepare.

The remaining four types of competition are: a) Sectional Championships, b) Divisional Championships, c) Canadian Championships, and d) International competitions and Chamionships. The first three, and at least one international event, the World Championships, are held annually.

A Sectional Championship is held in each section for the purpose of qualifying skaters to participate in the Divisional Championships. The Section may hold preliminary rounds to qualify skaters for the Sectionals. The Alberta Section holds two sub-sectional competitions, one in the north and one in the south.

For the purposes of qualifying skaters to the Canadians, the Sections are grouped into four divisions for Divisional Championships.[31] Alberta is in the Western Division with British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. A predetermined number of skaters may progress from Sectionals to Divisionals in each of the qualifying events. However, the Section Executive

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[31] The Divisional structure began in 1974.

Committee has the authority to decide to send fewer than the number of entries permitted. The number of skaters qualifying from Divisionals to Canadians is established in the Rulebook.

The format of the Sectional, Divisional and Canadian competitions is standardized to include at least Novice, Junior and Senior categories in each of free skate, dance and pairs. Eligibility for these categories is based on the CFSA Competitive Test levels. The Canadian Championships usually determine which skaters will compete in international competitions, such as the Worlds and the Winter Olympics. The number of competitors Canada is permitted to send varies from year to year and event to event.[32] The general basis for selection is the placing of a skater in the most recent Canadian Championships. There have been exceptions to this method of selection[33] and the ultimate authority is vested in the CFSA Board of Directors. In the case of the Winter Olympics however, the Board recommends team members to the Canadian Olympic Association (COA) for their approval.[34] There are several other international competitions in which Canadian skaters participate. A major invitational event sponsored annually by the CFSA, is Skate Canada.

The competitive season stretches from October to the end of March, although some inter-club competitions are held in the summer months. The organization of competitions is a huge time and financial commitment. At the section level, a Competitions Chairman is appointed to oversee this activity area. In Alberta, the Vice-Chairman of Operations is also the Competitions Chairman. Another Sectional Executive member is responsible for representing figure skating in the organization of the Winter Games (Alberta and Canada). At the national level, there is a Competition Committee and a Canada Winter Games Committee as well.

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[32] Each country is assigned a quota of skaters eligible for international competitions. This quota is based on the country's previous years performances in each category. For example, if Canada places one competitor among the top ten in the Men's Free Skate at the Worlds, Canada is allowed to send two competitors in that event the following year. If two Canadians finish in the top ten, the CFSA is allowed to send the maximum three competitors.

[33] For example, there was a controversal decision made by the Board of Directors in 1979 to send the third place finisher, Tracy Wainman, to the Worlds that year instead of the Senior Ladies Champion.

[34] The COA is not just a rubberstamping committee. In the past, they have made decisions about the Olympic figure skating team which were counter to the Board's recommendations.

Skaters' Development

The third program in skating is Skaters' Development. The national Skaters' Development program began in 1971. The program is operated under the direction of a committee whose function is "to identify and develop excellence among Canadian figure skaters to assure top placings in international, World and Olympic competitions, and to recommend athletes to participate in these events" (1222 (xii)). The philosophical orientation the national Skaters' Development Committee began in 1976 with then Chairman David Dore:

> Our stated goal is elitism and by that I mean, winning or podium position. We are not out there internationally just to participate. Skaters know where the CFSA stands and what it wants them to accomplish. My committee has defined, published and made clear what the goals of the CFSA are. We have accountability for our money. Today, when youngsters fly out of Toronto airport to a competition, they know their jobs, what we expect from them. And they know if they meet our demands, the CFSA will support them morally and financially.

In the Alberta Section, as in every other Section, there is a Skaters' Development Committee headed by a Chairman appointed to sit on the Executive Committee. The Alberta Section Skaters' Development program involves redirecting financial support from various provincial governments and private sources to promising athletes for their training and/or travel expenses. As well, the Section hosts a skating seminar in the summer. Over thirty of Alberta's elite skaters spend an intensive week of on-ice and off-ice instruction in a variety of areas related to becoming an elite figure skater. The Sectional committee's actions are parallel to those of the national committee which also conducts skating seminars and "mix and match" sessions for dance and free skate pairing. The national Skaters' Development Committee provides direct financial support for training expenses to over 100 skaters who show competitive ability. The funding is derived from federal and private sources, as well as CFSA generated revenues from such things as television broadcasting rights. The sectional and national level programs do not overlap. An athlete who is chosen to attend a national seminar would not attend the sectional seminar. Likewise, an athlete who is financed nationally, would not be financed through the section.

Leadership Training

Leadership training encompasses a number of specific programs as follows:

1. NST Coaches
2. National Coaches Certification Program
3. Officials' Clinics
4. Precision Clinics
5. Skate-In

Instruction and testing of the NST programs is largely accomplished through the use of amateur skaters trained in weekend coaches' clinics. Over 7,000 amateur coaches are trained annually in Canada. During 1982-83, 25 clinics held in Alberta certified 733 individuals. There are four levels of Amateur Coach: junior, assistant, senior, and supervisory. The levels are based on age and ability.

Clinics are conducted where and when needed; usually this depends upon one or more clubs in an area requesting that one be held. Clinic conductors are professional coaches who are themselves trained in a clinic conductors' course. Each Section appoints an NST Director who coordinates the clinics, assigns conductors, supplies materials and information, promotes the program and maintains records for the national Association.

Registration covers the conductor's fee, but the majority of clinics lose money because of ice rentals and transportation costs. Clubs can apply for municipal or provincial recreation grants, but the financial responsibility for NST clinics largely rests with the clubs.

The professional coach, or in skating terminology, the "pro", is a key figure in the sport of figure skating. Every club has at least one professional coach, or is in the process of finding one. To varying degrees, the professionals are involved in the club's NST program. However, the major role of the professional involves the CFSA Test program. Coaching qualifications have traditionally been based upon the individual's own skating achievements and the achievements of his or her skater. For example, a coach who has passed the Fourth Figure is identified as a Fourth Figure professional. This does not mean that the coach cannot teach above that level. In fact, a coach whose skater succeeds at passing a higher test, is ranked up to the level attained by her/his skater. Since the CFSA maintains extensive test records, the qualifications of professionals based upon these traditional measures are relatively easy to verify.

More recently, a certification system for figure skating coaches has been implemented. In part, the new system has come about as a result of pressure from the federal agency responsible for sport, Sport Canada. Concern for the level of expertise in coaching in figure skating was also a focus of attention within the CFSA. The traditional method whereby professionals come from the skating ranks themselves, with little specific training as coaches, was considered a major reason behind Canada's declining success in international figure skating competition (Taylor, 1979, p. 7).

The Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) developed the National Coaches' Certification Program (NCCP) in the mid 1970's to upgrade and standardize the quality of coaching in amatuer sport. The program contains five levels and is divided into three areas including a general theoretical component and technical and practical components that are sport specific. The development and promotion of these last two are the responsibility of the national governing bodies in each sport. Sport Canada provides substantial funding to each sport to develop and implement NCCP. Initially, the CFSA and the association of professional coaches (FSCC), worked together to develop the NCCP manuals and clinics for figure skating, the first level of which was available in 1979.

As with the NST program, weekend technical clinics are held based on demand and they are conducted by trained instructors. Both CAC and CFSA maintain records of certified coaches. A coach must complete all three components on any one level to be fully certified at that level. (In figure skating, three levels have been developed to date.)

In 1982, pressure from Sport Canada and CAC resulted in the CFSA taking full administrative responsibility for the program. In a related issue, the CFSA moved to amalgamate the FSCC with the CFSA. B.H. explained the situation as follows:

> It was said that there were over 4,000 figure skating coaches in the country and only 700 or so were members of the FSCC, which said that they had coaches up to level three within that organization, but what was the level of competency of all the rest. When Sport Canada saw that, they decided that if the figure skating coaches of Canada were to continue to get funding, and that's where it all comes from, through Sport Canada, that they were going to have to be more effectively controlled through a recognized amateur sport body, in this case CFSA. And the coaches backed up, there was quite a bit of rigoramole going on. In fact the Ontario Figure Skating Coaches were going to take the CFSA to court in Ontario. What they did was there were certain by-law changes made at the CFSA AGM last year that said that every figure skating coach in Canada had to become a member of CFSA. They balked at that; they were professionals. What they don't realize is that they should be coaches, not just professionals and there's a lot of difference between professionals and coaches. The FSCC have an office in Vancouver...but for 700 members, typically if our house was in that kind of array, I can see the Federal government coming in and saying "smarten up yourselves or we'll smarten you up"....Why should I as a parent, or my daughter, take skating from somebody when you really don't know what their level of skill is. Just because you have your figures or your gold free skate doesn't make you a good coach. Those coaches that have taken even the FSCC coaches clinics, there's a measure of competency...and CFSA took this over and throughout Canada and in Alberta there's been quite a lot of resistance to taking the clinics. None of us, no matter what we do, can afford to be so insular that we don't recognize what's going on in the rest of the world. They will realize that Sport Canada is now funding the money through the amateur body. That's what will work this out. (12:4)

For the first year that NCCP was under the compete jurisdiction of the CFSA, the Section office staff coordinated the program in Alberta. Two Level 1 technical courses were offered in 1982-83 and 22 coaches were certified.

The third area of leadership training involves officials. Judges, referees and accountants are trained, examined, promoted and assigned by the Association. Judges are involved in CFSA tests and competitions. Supervision of the technical aspects of preparation for and conduct of tests or competitions is the duty of referees. (A referee is also a qualified judge.) Accountants tabulate judges' marks to results and are mostly involved in competitions.

There are several different levels of judges and these parallel the CFSA Test structure. For example, a Second Figure Judge is qualified to test up to and including the Second Figure test. Gunter (1979) explained the importance attached to standardization of skating across Canada, and the role of judging in that process, as follows:

> As you become more skillful on the ice and perhaps even begin to think of competing in our sport, you will start climbing the CFSA test ladder, be it figures, free skating, dance or pair tests or perhaps all four. Then you will benefit from the centralized control which ensures, for example, the the fourth figure test meets the same

> minimum standard be it taken in Victoria, B.C. or in St. John's, Nfld; and that all pre-requisites have been met before the test is validated and stored in our central test records and the test certificate issued. Of course, the rigid national test structure is only a part of this story. The real key to standardization is in the judging, and here the national body carries out the major burden of recruiting, training, testing and promoting judges and other officials. Without this vital role at the national level our sport would soon become a shambles. (p. 41)

Progression through the various levels of judging is conditional upon the following:

1. remaining an amateur;
2. passing the required examination;
3. judging satisfactorily at each level; and

attending the required number of training clinics (Berezowski, 1982, p. 33).

Competitive judges are ranked according to the competitive structure. Climbing the competitive ladder takes as long for a judge as it does for a skater. It takes a minimum of 13 years to meet the ISU requirements for promotion to the international level. "However, since each country is on a quota system, there may not be an opening, and this could result in a delay of perhaps several years. Following an additional three years of experience and passing the I.S.U. examination, an application could be made to become a World (International Skating Union) Championship judge" (Berezowski, 1982, p. 33).

A referee must be qualified as a judge to the appropriate level of competition for which he or she is selected. Accountants must also attend clinics and write exams to be appointed or promoted as club, sectional or Canadian level officials. Records of officials' qualifications are maintained by the national office and appointments and promotions are issued from there annually. There are two national committees charged with the development of officials: the Judges Committee and the Accountants Committee. The administration of training clinics, and the appointment of officials to tests and competitions within each Section, are handled by the Chairmen of the Sectional Judges Committee and the Accountants Committee. The Chairmen of these committees are appointed by the Section Chairman and sit on the Executive Committee. Clinics are held on the basis of need and during 1982-83 there were three Accountants' clinics and no Judges' clinics held in Alberta.

According to the Accountants Chairman, Alberta has more than enough accountants (29 in 1982-83), but judges are in short supply. Fewer people are becoming judges and as J.M.

noted, the former pool of judges is "getting old" (1:14). A Zone Director suggested that the lack of judges is a consequence of the economic times; people who used to volunteer their time to judge are now having to work, thus decreasing their availability. The majority of judges are parents of skaters.

As outlined earlier, the process for becoming a judge is lengthy and involved. The CFSA has made some changes to enable skaters, present or past, to advance through the judging levels much more quickly in the hopes of attracting more officials from that part of the skating community. Otherwise, the CFSA has largely depended upon the section and local club levels to recruit prospective judges. There are some areas within the Alberta Section that have an adequate supply of judges at the various test and competitive levels. Generally, however, lack of judges is a perennial problem.

The last two leadership areas are Precision and Administration. Precision skating involves groups of up to 20 skaters performing simultaniously and can be likened to the chorus line in dance. Up until the mid 1970's, precision was usually performed at ice shows or carnivals. The event gained popularity as a separate entity, appealing to skaters who weren't strong individual skaters but who enjoyed performing and competing. The first Canadian Precision Championships were held in 1982. Much of the early growth in precision skating occured in southern Ontario.

Clinics are held to promote Precision Judges and to instruct coaches in techniques. Although in the formative stage, a system for training Precision Judges is being developed along similar lines to the CFSA Test/Competitive Judges system. There is a national committee for Precision and each section appoints a representative who coordinates the activities within the section.

Of all the leadership training areas, administrative or executive training, is the least formalized. Except for workshops at the Annual General Meeting, the CFSA does not provide administrative training. The Alberta Section does not provide training for its own executive members. However, the Section sponsors a weekend workshop, called Skate-In, every other year. Skate-In is designed to train and assist executive members within clubs and was first organized in 1974. (The Alberta Section modeled their Skate-In workshop after similar ventures in other sections.) Although aimed at the club level, the Section anticipates that the people who attend Skate-In, "will eventually filter up instead of filter down" (1:2).

Communications

The final program area of skating is communications. In many respects, communication is implicit within the other program areas. For example, the leadership clinics could not be held unless there was structure for disseminating information about such clinics. Although communication is a part of the other program areas, and is tailored to their special needs, there are at least two communication vehicles that stand apart. These vehicles represent internal and external forms of communication.

Internal communication includes the numerous publications of the CFSA that range from "how to" type booklets on organizing a club to the principle house organ, the Canadian Skater, published six times annually. At the Sectional level there are a variety of newsletter/minimagazine type publications. In Alberta, these are the Big A, the Section newsletter and the NST newsletter. The Alberta Section also contributes regularly to the Canadian Skater. Within some Alberta zones, newsletters are published on a regular basis. As well, some clubs publish their own newsletters and most clubs institute the bulletin board system for passing on information to their members.

Internal communication is also served through committee meetings and annual meetings of the general membership. Clubs, Sections and the national Association all conduct committee and executive meetings, as well as general membership meetings. Other means of internal communication include minutes, notices, memos and reports. As one member exclaimed, "I get mail everyday" (9:4). There are a number of standard procedures which require that a report be filed or an announcement be sent to certain individuals. In almost all aspects of figure skating, there is an emphasis on written communication.

External communication is an important mandate at both the national and sectional levels. The CFSA employs professionals in the areas of Public Relations and Marketing. The Alberta Section has a Public Relations Chairman on the Executive Committee. Clubs are also encouraged to appoint a Public Relations member to their executives.

The CFSA is very conscious of the image the media can create for skating and prepares its elite skaters to handle the press through special workshops at the summer skating seminars. The Alberta Section also includes a session on dealing with the media at their summer skating seminar and for their administrators at Skate-In.

Media coverage of national and international figure skating events is extensive. At the sectional and club levels, most coverage is through the print media, although radio and television coverage of sectional competition results does occur.[35] Local athletes who perform well nationally or internationally bring greater media attention to that area as a result of their performances. A recent example of this phenomenon in Alberta was Brian Pockar of Calgary. Local talent also influences area skaters. J.M. described how Pokar's rise to Canadian Men's Champion gave the local skaters "something to strive at...the kids are proud of the fact that we had one in Alberta" (1:25).

The impact of the media, in particular television, on the sport of figure skating has been significant in terms of increased exposure for the sport and financial benefits.[36] The CFSA negotiates the rights and controls revenues; the Alberta Section is not involved with television contracts. However, the Section benefits indirectly from the funding of national programs and from the interest televising of skating events creates at the grass roots level.

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[35] If a section wished to have local coverage of an event, other than a newsreport, negotiations would have to be be made through the CFSA. As well, if a section wanted to hold a press conference or to promote skating apart from a scheduled skating event, it would require official sanction.

[36] The impact of the media on the staging of major figure skating competitions would be an interesting study on its own. For example, prior to 1973, single free skate competitions were divided into 60% figures and 40% free style. Under this system, relatively poor free skaters would capture the world title by performing excellent figures. Figures are an important fundemental skill in skating, but they are not suited to television or to the layman. They represent a mysterious element which appears to separate the medal contenders from the rest before the actual contest begins, i.e., the free skating portion. The public, through television, saw only the free skate portion of the competition and were often confused when the skater who received poor free skate marks came out on top because he or she had achieved good figure marks. Although the 60/40 split had existed for years, international skating had never been exposed to as vast an audience as television created. As well, the television audience was largely North American, and American skaters tended to be more electric free skaters than skilled figure specialists which

The other side of publicity is that it places skating in the public forum and opens it up for criticism. Nowhere is this more evident than in the annual outcry over judging bias at international skating events. One member explained the negative side of publicity:

> I'd really like to see a better image of figure skating for the general public because I do think they see a lot of negative things, or things that they don't understand about the sport. I can't see how they can watch the Worlds on TV and comprehend the complexity of the judging that's involved and that's not helped by people in the media. They don't really make an attempt to help the general public to understand what's going on. (7:3)

Since the early 60's, CTV has been the major network involved in televising of figure skating. The CFSA controls the rights for Skate Canada and the Canadian Championships; the ISU controls the rights to the World Championships. During 1982-83, CTV owned the rights for all three major skating events. The CTV's average viewer rating for the three broadcasts combined was 10.3 or 1,453,000 viewers per quarter-hour of figure skating (Milton, 1983, p. 15). The CFSA earned approximately $160,000 in television rights (Milton, 1983, p. 15). For the 1983-84 season, the CFSA collaborated with CTV and developed an innovative marketing project predicted to be worth more than $400,000 to the Association. The project involved eight major sponsors as the only on-air sponsors of the three major skating events CTV broadcasted. Aside from Winter Olympic coverage, which was contracted under a different arrangement, CTV broadcast 14 hours of figure skating. The CFSA's marketing consultant Chris Lang suggested that the successful performances of the 1983 international team was one factor in the new television contract (Milton, 1983, p. 16).

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[34](cont'd) the Europeans were. Public and media disapproval of the competitive system must have been a factor in the ISU's decision to reduce the value of figures to 30% and introduce a short free skate worth 20% and increase the value of the long free skate to 50%.

Summary

From the foregoing description, it would appear that there is a broad range of programs and activities involved in figure skating. Also, the majority of programs are provided for the more skilled participant. Although the majority of skaters across Canada are involved at the recreational, non-competitive level, a greater proportion of energy and money is spent by the Association and each section on the competitive level participants.

There are several reasons for this apparent discrepency. The costs related to running an NST program are much lower than those related to grooming an Olympic champion:

1. The recreational program is not labour intensive; the instructor-skater ratio is high.
2. The program is highly structured and can be run with little off-ice preparation.
3. A large number of instructors in the NST program are volunteers and the necessary qualifications for NST instructors are minimal.
4. Program costs are also kept low by the minimal ice time required and the large number of skaters accomodated within that time.

In short, the recreational program is highly cost effective. It is also the CFSA's, and the Alberta Section's, most popular program in terms of the number of members involved in it.

One important question is whether or not this apparent inequality, as a result of spending priorities, has an affect on membership satisfaction. In the Alberta Section there did not appear to be any widespread dissatisfaction among clubs, parents and skaters who were mainly involved with the recreational programs, or at least, none had manifested itself into an organized movement. However, it was acknowledged by several individuals interviewed that the recreational members tended to be very apathetic to the operation of the Section and the CFSA. One explanation for this lack of involvement might be the large turnover of participants that occurs in the NST program. A parent whose child skates one hour per week for only one or two years is not likely to become involved in the administration of a club, and even less likely to become involved in anything beyond the club level.

One Zone Director explained the situation vis-a-vis club involvement as follows:

> There are some clubs in my zone that don't come to any meetings. They never phone me. They're just not interested enough. They probably run NST programs and they can do everything themselves. They're not dependent on our judges. They don't have kids they're sending to competitions. They don't have kids they want in provincial seminars. They are just a recreation club, but they are sanctioned. They don't want to be that motivated. I think that they just read the letters [she sends] and say, "oh, this doesn't apply to us. None of this matters to us". And 60 miles in, who wants to go to a meeting about things they think they don't need to know? (11:11-12)

A similar viewpoint was expressed by another individual who stated that "at the rural club [primarily NST], they're not too concerned about getting involved. All they want is for their children to learn to skate" (9:8).

A consequence of this apparent apathy, is that the particular needs and interests of the NST skater may not be suitably addressed within the decision making levels of the Section and the CFSA. Further, if the organization is perceived as no longer relevant to the needs and interests of a large portion of members, this could have a serious impact on the growth of the Association. Were this situation to persist, it could eventually lead to a major split between the recreational and elite proponents within the organization.

Thus, it appears that the programs and services of the Section and the CFSA are very elitist oriented. Given that the majority of members are recreational level participants, there is a very real potential for dissatisfaction among that segment of the organization. However, if the majority of members only want to learn to skate, or want their child to learn, and they are getting that opportunity, then they may not bother to complain. A more serious issue is that the CFSA is elitist oriented and yet it claims to speak for all skaters. Thus, part of the Association's power is based upon its large membership size while it is really only concerned with a small portion of that membership. For the Association to continue to be viable as a service organization developing figure skating "in all its branches", this issue should be carefully examined.

F. Organizational Structure of the Alberta Section

In this study, the analysis of the organizational structure of the Alberta Section was based on five dimensions or characteristics as follows: 1) specialization, 2) formalization, 3) standardization, 4) centralization and 5) configuration. The concepts and operational definitions for these definitions were based on the work of the Aston research team as described in Chapter II (pp. 13-16).

Specialization

The first structural dimension, specialization, describes how an organization's work is divided. Specialization may be in a horizontal or a vertical direction, or both. Horizontal specialization concerns the subdivision of work along a particular level of the organization. Vertical specialization describes the extent to which an organization is divided hierarchically according to decision making authority.

The Alberta Section divided most of its work according to particular program areas and there was little crossover or duplication between these specialized positions. The situation within the Alberta Section Executive Committee reflected the specialized nature of figure skating overall, from the ISU to the club. Although the Section Executive Committee was comprised of only two decision-making levels, the number of levels above and below that particular committee indicated a high degree of horizontal specialization in figure skating (see Figure 2).

The Executive Committee of the Alberta Section has two levels: the Board of Management at the top and the rest of the Executive members below (see Figure 3). A third, lower level could be said to exist, in that four committee members do not have voting privileges. However, those four are involved in general discussions and idea formation at the meetings, as well as having specific areas of responsibility and authority. Therefore, these four positions were included in the second or lower level of the Executive Committee in this study.

The lower level of the Executive Committee featured a high degree of horizontal specialization; that is, specific activities were performed by one or more individuals with that function and no other. For example, the Precision Chairman's responsibilities include the promotion of precision skating in the Section and all the chairman's activities focus on that purpose. Since there are Precision Championships, the chairman would also be involved with related aspects of competition, e.g., judging, but only in regard to that particular form of figure skating.

One member compared the Section to another provincial governing body with which she was involved:

> It's really funny how figure skating is defined really carefully. Everybody has their own little part that they do. Just looking at the _ provincial governing body, they're not like that, they're all coming to it on the same level. Like there's just this many executive members [voted in] and then they decide later on what they're going to do and what areas they're going to be involved in and their lines really overlap a lot. In skating it's really separate, everybody has a little separate area that they look after like accounting or judging or a zone. They are all really defined responsibilities or areas of responsibility. I think that probably comes from the specialities that people have and the areas that we need to be specialized in. Not anybody could be Judges Chairman, we've found that from past experience. (7:4)

The other highly specialized positions on the executive were the chairmen for Judges, Accountants, NST, Winter Games, Public Relations and Singles Seminar. Each position has well-defined areas of responsibility as the various titles suggest. When asked about overlap or duplication of activities, most of those interviewed indicated that their position did not overlap with another's. Accoring to K.J., overlap or duplication of function occurred in regard to decision making within the setting of a committee meeting:

> In the executive meetings, when you're doing decision making, then that's when you see everybody's expertise overlapping. It's not like you're on somebody else's committee or something like that, but when you are doing decision making, that's when everybody's expertise does come together. I think that's where you see most of the overlapping taking place, when there are executive meetings and you're deciding things. (7:5)

The Zone Directors perform a wide variety of tasks in their roles as liason between clubs and section. However, the Zone Directors interviewed stressed that regional differences made their jobs unique from zone to zone. A.S. explained:

> We all handle things differently and we have different needs too. I think down in the south it's a lot more independent. I don't think they even have the number of clubs. The Central Zone, I think that at least two years ago they were very well organized as far as their testing and they seemed to be in very good touch with each other as to who

> was doing what when and trading kids around. I really admired their method and felt that there should be things from there that we could borrow. We all end up with the same results, but the way that we do it is different, tailored to our needs. Calgary Zone is lucky, we've got a lot of judges, maybe that's why we tend to let the clubs operate and test more on their own. If you were to talk to someone from the Northwest Territories, they have problems up there like you wouldn't believe. (11:9)

Along the upper horizontal level of the Section's Executive Committee the positions varied in their degree of specialization. The Secretary-Treasurer's position was the most specific, although many financial matters were taken care of by the paid administrators of the section and the position itself had become somewhat of a figurehead. That is to say that many of the day-to-day activities associated with the Section's finances were carried out by the Executive Director, but the Secretary-Treasurer still had ultimate responsibility to ensure things were done properly. The Past-Chairman also had specific areas of responsibility, but this overlapped with a number of other positions. For example, he was responsible for new memberships, which entailed screening applications as to their completeness and corrections. However, the applications were then sent to the Chairman of the Section for approval before being sent to the National Membership Chairman. The Vice-Chairmen both had specific areas of responsibility which in this case meant that most of the programs and committees were divided between them for supervision. The Chairman's position was the least specified. The Chairman was an ex-officio member of all committees in the Section and was responsible for overseeing all of the activities governed by the Section.

Two other positions which should be dealt with at this point are the Executive Director and the Secretary/Bookkeeper. It is difficult to situate an Executive Director along a particular horizontal level in a volunteer organization. In a business organization, the position would be below the Board of Directors, or in this case, the Executive Committee. However, for many volunteer organizations, the reality is often that the paid personnel are the ones who have the most complete and up-to-date information, and who are responsible for the day to day operations of that organization. In some cases this may be problematic, but it did not appear to have manifested itself as such in this instance. The Executive Director considered herself to be working for the Executive Committee and the Section: "they make the decisions and I follow them through" (4:3). Unlike most voluntary organizations which experience high employee turnover, the Executive Director of the Section had been in that position for over five years. As L.C. explained, the position has changed somewhat with changes in the executive:

> The Executive Director's position with an amateur sport body changes with the executive. Some people expect more, some less. It depends really a lot on how your executive looks at the position and it can change to some degree from year to year. I've had a change, in five years that I've been here. Some executives have expected certain things to be done by you and then the next executive will come along and wish to do those things. It does change to some degree because it's not specifically laid out. (4:5)

The Secretary/Bookkeeper position was more specified than the Executive Director's, but it was also responsive to the changing expectations of the Executive Committee.

From an historical perspective, the number of positions on the Sectional Executive Committee increased in response to the expanding membership and the introduction of new programs. As the organization grew and became more complex, the division of labour within the Section became more specialized. Since its inception in 1969, the Executive Committee nearly doubled in size from eleven to twenty-one voting and non-voting members. Reflecting on the early years, J.V. stated that "having fewer people there was certainly more overlap of activities and duties" (14:10).

The increasing number of clubs in the Section affected the number of Zone Directors. In 1969 there were five zones and by 1982 there were eight. The three new zones were the result of new divisions in the northern part of the Section, the area of greatest membership growth.

New positions on the Executive were also created to accomodate new tasks or tasks from existing positions which had been redivided. Skaters' Development, Singles Seminar, Precision and Winter Games were new programming areas which had developed since the Section was formed. The Accountants Chairmanship was a result of accounting becoming a separate entity apart from the Judges Committee's jurisdiction. This latter change occurred at the National level and the sections were directed to appoint an Accounting Chairman. As will be discussed further on, many decisions within Canadian skating are centralized and this is one example of a the CFSA's authority over the Section's division of work.

Over the years the Section's records show that a number of positions existed and then disappeared after one or two years. Often individuals in these positions sat on the Executive Committee in a representative capacity and did not have a vote. Such positions either disappeared altogether or the tasks were subsequently assigned to another position. For example, the Section joined Sport Alberta in 1976 and for the first year the Section's representative to Sport Alberta sat on the Executive Committee. Since then, that task has been incorporated into another position.

The second aspect of specialization, vertical specialization, concerns divisions based on decision-making authority. From the previous description of the administration of figure skating, it was shown that the Alberta Section operates within a hierarchy of authority, as well as having a hierarchy within its own structure. The authority relationships are defined in the rules and regulations of the Association, as well as the Section's Constitution and By-Laws.

Since the Section's formation, the only change that has occurred in its vertical specialization has been the institution of a Board of Management in 1978. However, the Board's actual authority is minimal and its major role is as an advisor to the Section Executive Committee. The Board has some financial authority to commit Section monies to things not previously included in the budget, but only to an amount representing less than two percent of the total budget.[37] As a subgroup of the Executive Committee, the Board members represent only four of sixteen votes (the Chairman has a deciding vote in the event of a tie). Finally, the Board meets formally on only one or two occassions per year. The minutes from these meetings suggest they have been used for discussion and generation of ideas.

The number of levels within the Alberta Section has remained essentially the same, i.e., the club, zone and Section. However, the relationships between these levels have become more clearly defined. Firstly, the zone's mediating function, between the clubs and the Section, has increased. In part, this was a result of the clubs being encouraged to go through their zone directors with problems before going to the Section. The Zone Director has a better awareness of what happens at the club level than do other members of the Section executive, particularly given the regional differences between zones. Participants at the 1980 Skate-In workshop were advised in a manual that "there is a two way street to the zone responsibility--the clubs are responsible to the director to keep them [zone directors] informed of their needs, problems etc.--the director is responsible to the clubs for taking the required action requested by the clubs to the Section executive. The Section executive then will either deal with the problem or go to the CFSA for further direction and then back to the zone director with the answer."

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[37] This is based on the permitted total commitment ($1,500) and the 1982-83 budget of $113,193.

The zones have become more organized as well. Some have collected nominal fees from each club to provide a budget that was separate and autonomous from the Section's budget. Still however, the zones must work within the rules of the CFSA.

Similarly, the role of the Section as mediator between club and national levels increased. In part, this was a result of the Section office and staff. The office functions as a permanent and central point from which clubs can obtain national level information and alternatively, through which the national level can disseminate information to the local level.

An indication of the amount of vertical specialization can also be derived by examining reporting behaviours. At every executive meeting, each member is given the opportunity to present a verbal report. Every executive member must also submit a written report for the Section's Annual Report booklet to be distributed at the Annual Meeting. These reports vary from one to several pages in length. Aside from reporting at the executive committee, some members are required to report to the Chairman of a national committee such as the NST or Judges Committee. The Section Chairman reports on the Section's activities at each meeting of the national Section Committee and must submit a written report for the CFSA annual report at the AGM. The Zone Directors indicated that the clubs should report to them, but there did not appear to be a formal means of doing so. Other Section executives who had assistants, for example the Accountants Chairman, indicated that that individual might report to them, but again, nothing was formalized. Although a high degree of reporting occurred, it was more in the form of information sharing, except in the case of reports to national level committees.

According to the Constitution, the Section staff are the responsibility of the Vice-Chairman Administration with the Executive Director placed in a supervisory role over the Secretary/Bookkeeper. However, the Executive Director indicated that she reported to the Chairman, contacting him on a weekly basis. When the Chairman was living in Edmonton, the Executive Director noted that contact was more frequent, sometimes daily.

A further aspect of specialization considered important by Hage (1965) was the extent of training and qualifications required by various specialties within an organization. Hage (1965) suggested that the "greater the number of occupations and the longer the period of training required, the more complex the organization" (p. 294). Members of the Executive Committee interviewed for this study were asked to describe any special skills or qualifications they possessed which assisted them in fulfilling their positions. Also, the respondents were questioned about their training and experience related to figure skating. Their responses suggest that qualifications and training were considered important to fulfilling various positions on the Executive Committee.

Firstly, technical knowledge of the skills of the sports was identified by the majority of respondents as significant to their general role as committee members. In figure skating, the three roles for which particular knowledge of sport skills is essential are: 1) skaters, 2) coaches, and 3) officials. Of the fourteen individuals interviewed, all but five were, or had been, CFSA judges. B.P. summarized this feature of the Section's Executive Committee stating:

> No, I believe I'm one of the few who doesn't have [any qualifications]. I know in the past, even in the past month at our executive meeting, I would ask the members how many judges there were and I'd have to say that all but two or three of us have never judged, all the rest are judges. So they have some specialties that I haven't...at least they have some idea what the kids are taught and what their goals are. (9:1)

Another respondent noted that executive members usually became judges before getting into the administration of figure skating. However, he emphasized that "we've had some wonderful administrators in the CFSA that weren't judges" (14:1).[11]

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[11] The current CFSA President, who was re-elected for a second term and has been instrumental in developing the Association's program for producing top international skaters, is a World Judge.

Further evidence of the importance placed on general figure skating knowledge was exemplified by the rationale used to deny voting privileges to the Public Relations position. P.C. explained:

> The reasoning was that it could be someone [who's] not even involved in figure skating [who] does Public Relations and doesn't really know anything about figure skating. So they thought it was best that we didn't have a vote, which annoys me a little bit. (2:4)

A potential conflict of interest exists in the Alberta Section with the high proportion of Executive Committee members who are officials. Although officiating enhances knowledge and exposure to figure skating, it is limited to the advanced or competitive skater. However, the majority of registered figure skaters in Canada are enrolled in recreational NST programs which do not involve CFSA officials in any way. Thus, there is potential for the executive members to be oriented more toward the needs of the competitive skater than the recreational skater.

The second way in which qualifications were important was in the fulfillment of specific positions or specialities. One respondent, explained that his career qualifications as a manager provided him with the necessary skills for the position of Vice-Chairman Administration. The Section Chairman also suggested his professional careers as a high school teacher and a chiropractor assisted him, stating "I think that my background lends to a business head" (9:1). J.M. echoed these sentiments stating, "I guess administration is probably my forte because for 22 years in the service I did the same thing" (1:1). Alternatively, another individual responded to the question as follows:

> Not for Secretary-Treasurer. I'm really bad at accounting. As far as the sport in general, because I skated and because I've been involved as a judge for a long time, those are the things that have probably helped as far as the executive goes. (7:1)

In this case, however, the lack of accounting skills may relate to the fact that actual financial control and bookkeeping was relegated to the Section office and staff in 1980 and the executive position had evolved into a supervisory role. From Section records, it was evident that on at least one occassion, the Treasurer had been a chartered accountant by trade.

Computer literacy was identified as an important skill by the Accounting Chairman who explained:

> My own job is sort of helping me on a new avenue that has been introduced into the accounting field of skating. That is that for the last five years, the compiling of the results has been on computer and I work with the computer at work so it was very easy to adapt to another program. (3:1)

The Accounting Chairman was a Sectional level accountant, the Judges Chairman was a national level judge and the Chairman of the Skaters' Development Committee was also a national level judge. As the Chairman of Skaters' Development explained, all members of her committee were CFSA judges:

> I think that for this committee you really do have to have some knowledge of skating and the ability to really pick out the potential of the skaters. Some people just don't know enough about it, they're not advanced enough in their knowledge of judging and their knowledge of skating itself. People on my committee are all judges because in that way too, they are out judging competitions, judging tests, so that you actually see the kids more often. We're all supposed to be watching them all year, at practice sessions and whatever. You often will just pick somebody out that you've never seen before and suddenly, there is just a certain something about it that you can't put a finger on that shows the potential and that's where you need the judgement to be able to pick it. (10:1)

Apart from training required to become an official or a coach, the Section has not provided specific training for its executive members. Most executive members attend the Skate-In workshop, but it is primarily designed for club level executives. However, "on the job" training and experience gained through involvement at the lower levels, e.g., as club executives or assistants to Section executives, were considered key mechanisms for learning.

An executive member emphasized the importance of "hands on" experience, stating:

> I think that the major thing you have to have to continue climbing up the ladder within the clubs and the zones and the Section, is past experience. The more you're in it, the more you learn about the rules of the organizations. (8:1)

For all the individuals interviewed, the progression toward becoming an Executive Committee member was similar. Only two people interviewed became initially interested in skating as participants themselves. The majority became involved through the participation of their children. With the exception of the two former skaters, the executive members interviewed had each been on the executive committees of their child's club, usually in two or three different positions. From there, they progressed by moving directly into a Section executive position or by working on a zone executive (other than as Zone Director), or alternatively, by becoming an assistant to an executive chairman such as the Judges or Accountants Chairman. Thus, training through experience appeared to play a major part in the advancement of executive members.

In summary, the Alberta Section divided most of its work according to program areas. These areas were highly specialized with little duplication or crossover among them. Certain activities require cooperation between different positions such as Judging and Accounting during a competition, but even in those situations, the tasks were very much divided. Except for their participation at committee meetings, most executive members performed their particular function exclusively. At the Board of Management level, the division of labour was less clearly defined, although there was an attempt to distinguish areas of responsibility for each position.

The Alberta Section had a low level of horizontal specialization within its Executive Committee structure. However, the previous descriptions of the different decision making levels involved in figure skating indicated a highly specialized authority structure. The chain of command from skater to club, club to zone, zone to section, section to CFSA and CFSA to ISU, is a very established feature of the sport.

Finally, while there were no specific training programs or qualifications for members of the Executive Committee, the background of those interviewed suggested a pattern for advancement in the administration of figure skating. Experiences gained in the administration of figure skating at a club or zone level, combined with qualifications in the officiating aspect of the sport, seemed to be pre-requisite to participation on the Section Executive Committee.

Standardization and Formalization

The second and third structural dimensions examined were standardization and formalization. Both dimensions concern the extent to which the activities of the organization are proceduralized and are governed by rules and regulations. Formalization also concerns whether there are written documents defining procedures, rules, instructions and communications. The work of the Aston group showed that these two dimensions combined with specialization to produce a factor they called "structuring of activities". Their findings suggested that the more specialized an organization's work becomes, the more standardized and formalized procedures there will be to prescribe the behavior of people in that organization.

To assess the degree to which these two dimensions were manifested in the Alberta Section, relevant documents and information provided by the Section members interviewed, was gathered and analyzed. There was a high degree proceduralization within the organization studied. Given the high degree of work specialization in the Section, this finding was consistent with the Aston concept, "structuring of activities."

Procedures are highly standardized when the approach to all circumstances is regulated by definitions which apply invariably. Rules on how to proceed in cases not specifically covered would also exist in a highly standardized organization. However, within most organizations, the degree to which procedures are standardized varies. The large number of procedures involved in figure skating made it difficult to investigate all of them. Within the five program areas described previously, there were numerous procedures for making decisions, passing along information and operating activities or implementing decisions. There were application procedures for club membership, sanctioning procedures for holding competitions, carnivals and exhibitions, operating procedures for almost every kind of test, clinic, competition and committee meeting. The degree to which these procedures were standardized did vary. The degree of standardization was distinctly greater for technical procedures, that is, those concerned with performance and measurement of skating skills, e.g., tests and competitions. Administrative procedures were presented more as guidelines. The main exceptions however, were procedures that related to the amateur status of skaters such as sanctioning and reimbursement for expenses. The extent to which procedures were standardized so that circumstances were governed by rules or definitions which applied invariably, also differed according to which technical or administrative level was involved. Thus, procedures dealing with the operation of a club were much more vague and open to interpretation than were procedures concerned with national or international operations. Similarly, the recreational skating program, NST, was not standardized to the extent that the CFSA Test program was standardized.

The third structuring of activity dimension examined was formalization. Two categories of formalization distinguished by the Aston group are role definition and role performance. In the Alberta Section there were three main role defining documents: a Terms of Reference, the Section's Consititution and By-Laws and the CFSA Rulebook. The Terms of Reference covered the general procedures for appointment of committee members, their operating procedures and their responsibilities. All Section committees, except Winter Games, were included, as were the two paid administrative positions. The Constitution and By-Laws described the duties of several executive members including the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, Secretary-Treasurer, Zone Directors, Judges, NST and Championship Committee Chairman, as well as the Executive Director.[39] The amount of job specialization involved in these job descriptions varied greatly. For example, the two Vice-Chairmens' duties were simply a listing of the areas of responsibility under either Administration or Operations. Whereas the Judges Chairman's duties comprised two pages of the constitution and outlined the duties of the position in detail. For example, one point was as follows: "on special forms provided, maintain statistics on the number of tests taken in each category."

The responses given by several members for whom many of the role defining documents existed, indicated that many members were unaware of the existence of, or were ill-informed about the content of some of these documents. However, this may not reflect a lack of knowledge as much as the recognition that certain positions were difficult to define in concrete terms. Several members said that they would prefer more material to refer to than was available.

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[39] These particular positions are ones that the CFSA mandates each section to include in their administrative structure, except for the Executive Director.

The third document for defining roles was the CFSA Official Rulebook. Again there was a wide variation in the degree of precision of rules describing the duties, responsibilities and authority of different positions and membership categories. Maximally formalized procedures and rules pertained to the technical aspects of skating, tests and competitions, while minimally formalized procedures applied to the day to day administrative operations of a skating club.

Slack (1983, pp. 213-214), in a study of a provincial sport governing body, concluded that the activities of that organization were carried out in a more personal manner than was suggested by the existing of authority relationships and complex rules and regulations. In contrast, the findings of this study suggest that the chain of command and the rules and regulations are very strictly adhered to. In an excerpt from the club executives' Skate-In training manual, this point was stressed as follows:

> The continued successful operation of the CFSA is based upon support and involvement of volunteers on an ever-increasing basis to further implement and promote its aims. A knowledge of the Canadian Figure Skating Assocation Official Rulebook is essential for this purpose. Equally vital is adherence to the "chain of command" from clubs to zones, zones to sections, and sections to national. In this way administrative and operational matters of essentially minor nature can be resolved quickly at the administrative and or operational level required.

Throughout the various documents examined, reference to rules was made repeatedly. The following paragraph from a letter to two Albertan skaters from the Section Chairman is an example of how rules are used to rectify a problem. Similar examples were found in numerous types of correspondence and documentation from all levels of the organization.

> The __ club writes and I quote--"__ and __ were invited to be guest skaters at our Ice Carnival, March 21st and 22nd, 1975. __ stated that they would not need a Chaperone because she was over 18 years of age (CFSA rule #4206) and that she would act as chaperone for __ who is under 18:--unquote. May I suggest that you read Rules 4202(f) and 4206(a&b), and note that an agreement had been made with the ___ club regarding a chaperone who is over 18 years of age and is quite acceptable as such under Rule 4206. The $80.00 and $40.00 that your mother and father have billed the club for is quite unacceptable. They are not your chaperones as agreed before hand. Rule 4206 does not allow 2 chaperones here.

When examining standardization and formalization processes in an organization, Hage (1965) contended that it is necessary to determine the extent to which rules are observed and enforced. Members of the Executive Committee interviewed were asked the extent to which activities or tasks they undertook were governed by rules or procedures. The inclusiveness of the Rulebook was stressed repeatedly in the responses given. One member keeps his Rulebook close at hand: "I have one at home and one in my office" (1:15). Another individual explained:

> I don't know if you realize, but figure skating is really set down in the Rulebook. We've got a Rulebook and they're quite specific. Whenever you're in doubt, you pick up that book and it's in there. You can't vary very much. (9:3)

M.M. did not hesitate to state that the Rulebook governed her activities "one hundred percent" and that the rules are enforced "totally; there's no way that you could not follow the rules" (3:6-7). Finally, another member gave his perspective of the Rulebook as follows:

> So much of figure skating, even at an administrative level, has an awful lot to do with treating that Rulebook like a Bible to be interfaced with on a continuous basis. (12:6-7)

The situation determines who enforces the rules. In a test or competition it is usually up to the head judge or chief referee to ensure that the rules are being followed. J.M. explained rule enforcement regarding actions of the Executive Committee:

> We've had to reverse some things that have happened in the past year, through inexperience of people on the Board, and they've made decisions at one Board meeting where it's definitely against the Rulebook. We've had to go back and rescind it when somebody reviews the minutes of the past meeting and all of a sudden they say "oh my god, we can't do that." But in order to say "we're wrong, we can't do it" and just rescind it and throw everybody into a cocked-hat, we go to the Rules Committee of the CFSA and say, "this is the way we interpreted it, are we right or wrong?" Then when they come back and say "you're right" [that you're wrong], then we rescind it...Somebody on the executive will catch it, they always do. (1:6)

When asked the purpose of the Rulebook, Executive Committee members were again consistent in their responses. Firstly, the Rulebook was considered to be a good guideline for the operation of every aspect of skating. However, a few individuals pointed out that there were some grey areas in the Rulebook. A.M. stated:

> I kind of laugh when I read it, there are some things that they are very vague about, they tell you exactly how much you must pay for everything, where it must be sent to and when it must be done by and everybody must register and they're very good in the rulebook about defining what belongs in what tests and what requirements there are and that sort of thing. But if you ever look at the club executive section, for instance, if you're looking for guidance in solving problems in your club, there's nothing, there's just a vast grey area...They define exactly what the skater must do but they don't really tell the clubs how to run. (11:12-13)

In particular, the Rulebook was vague regarding day to day operations of skating clubs. There was also very litte information pertaining to the NST program and the recreational skater in the Rulebook. The major focusses of the Rulebook were amateur status, tests and competitions. Thus, the composition of the Rulebook emphasizes that the primary objective of the Association is toward competitive skating.

The second purpose of the Rulebook seemed to almost contradict the first considering that 75% of skaters in Canada are involved in NST programs, the least controlled and standardized of all the CFSA's programs. Several respondents said that the Rulebook ensures standardization across the country. One member stated:

> We have to have some conformity throughout the country. I've never been to Nova Scotia but they have to live by the same rules I do. We've got to keep some kind of a semblance as to what the skaters are doing across the country. You don't want Alberta skaters to be different than B.C. skaters or Ontario skaters. It certainly keeps them all at the right level. (5:8)

The rules of the CFSA also conform to the rules of the ISU, particularly with regard to amateur status, competitions and tests. The extent of the ISU's control over international competition is illustrated in the following statement issued by the President and Chairman of the Ice Dance Committee:

> At the European Championships and Olympic Games the Ice Dance Committee observed certain violations of the Rules concerning the Original Set Pattern Dance and Free Dance.
>
> To conform with the Rules it should be remembered that, regardless of the rhythm for the Original Set Pattern Dance and the Free Dance, the dress must be modest and dignified; also the permitted Free Skating movements must be kept within the limits imposed and lifts should not be carried or sustained.
>
> It was also observed that too much emphasis is being made of facial expressions (permanent set smile, open mouth, eyes and head movements etc.) in expressing the music in the Original Set Pattern Dance and Free Dance. In the opinion of the Ice Dance Committee this is not the way to further the developement [sic] of Ice Dancing as a sport, but is more representative of a pantomine, exhibition and show style of skating. (ISU, 1976-02-10)

It is of interest to note the changes that have occurred since this statement was issued following the 1976 skating season, the first time that ice dance was included in the Olympics. Since then, there have been many interpretation changes in the rules of ice dance regarding the points highlighted in the above communique. Of the 1983 World Champions, Quinn (1984) wrote: "Torvill and Dean are so far advanced beyond their peers in interpretation, precision, degree of difficulty and innovation that the rules of ice dancing have been relaxed to accomodate their art" (p. 27). Thus, there is a possibility for individuals to affect the rules of the organization. What is difficult to discern, however, is the impact of the media and public support for the British dance pair on the ISU's leniancy.

The second category of formalization examined was role performance. Role performance documents existed mainly for technical matters such as skaters trying tests or competing and for officials seeking promotion. The national office maintained computerized records of all CFSA Test results. Competition results from Sectional, Divisional and Canadian Championships were also maintained in Ottawa. There are standard forms for reporting both test and competition results. An "NST Form" for Amateur Coaches' Clinics seeks information on the clinic organization, attendance and financial matters. The standard report form was in quadruplicate with two copies going to the national level and two to the sectional level. Another form, the "Report of the Chief Accountant", is used for summarizing the performance of accountants at sanctioned competitions and evaluating the overall organization of the officiating aspect of that competition. A copy goes to each of the national and sectional Accountants Chairman and is used in the procedure for evaluating applications for promotion.

There were no standard means of evaluating the role performance of executive members. Committee Chairmen must submit written reports on committee activities 10 days prior to the Annual Section meeting. As well, executive members may report at each executive meeting. However, there was nothing prescribing how these reports should be written. Certain style similarities in reports from different individuals suggest that unwritten standards or traditional ways of reporting have been passed on over the years, particularly through the Annual Report. Although these reports provided a basis for evaluation, the general feeling of those interviewed was that as elected or appointed representatives they were responsible to the rest of the Executive Committee and to the general membership of the Section and their performance was evaluated by their peers.

A third formalization category is information passing documents. Many of these have already been described in the earlier section on communication programs. All official communications used Association or Section letter head. The Canadian Skater, Section, zone and club newsletters, memos and announcements regularly passed information to members. Most information passes down the hierarchy from ISU to CFSA, CFSA to section, section to club and club to skater. A past member of the Section Executive Committee suggested that the "postage bill in the CFSA is bigger today then our whole national budget was 10 years ago, let alone the printing" (14:9).

One outcome of the Section operating a central office has been its ability to maintain files. Volunteer organizations are particularly vulnerable to losing/misplacing organizational records, statements, minutes of meetings and other documentation which may be important for future reference. As executive members come and go, so to do the organization's files. However, since the staffing of its office, the Alberta Section has been able to maintain copies of paper work in one central location. As well, the Section began depositing old files at the provincial archives in 1981, to ensure a permanent record of its activities.

Hall (1982) noted that "as a general rule, organizations that are more formalized on paper are more formalized in practice" (p. 99). Using the Aston group's distinction between standardization and formalization, this study found that the Alberta Section was highly formalized on paper and in practice. Although the scope of this study did not allow for intensive analysis of each procedure and document in existence, general analysis indicated a difference in the degree to which administrative and technical matters were standardized and formalized. The distinction could also be made according to the level to which the procedure or document applied. Thus, administrative procedures at the club level were the least standardized or formalized and technical procedures at the international level were the most standardized or formalized.

The findings of this study regarding the first three structural dimensions examined, specialization, formalization and standardization, tend to support the Aston concept, "structuring of activities". As the activities of the Alberta Section became more specialized, more procedures for doing the work were defined and documented. Although this study did not allow for direct comparison with other organizations, the emphasis placed on dividing the work into specific activities and on standardization of nearly every facet of figure skating, would undoubtedly be high in comparison to many other amateur sport organizations in Canada.

Centralization

The locus of authority to make decisions affecting the organization describes the fourth dimension of structure, centralization. The Aston work suggested that as an organization's activities becomes more structured (specialized, standardized and formalized), the locus of decision-making authority is delegated to lower levels of the hierarchy and the organization becomes decentralized. Based on this hypothesis, the high degree of activity structure in figure skating suggests that the organization would have decentralized its decision-making authority. However, the findings of this study indicate that figure skating in Canada is a highly centralized phenomenon. Indeed, "preserving a strong national association" was one of the Association's priority objectives used by the Board of Management to guide program development and budget preparation between 1979 and 1984 (Gunter, 1980, p. 46). In his speech to the membership at the 1982 AGM, CFSA President Dore stated:

> Finally, we must all work to preserve and support the centralized feature of the CFSA. There is no doubt in my mind that our strength and our future lies in the fact that we have a national association that can speak directly for the sport, that can utilize income to organize and direct unified programs.

The centralized orientation of the CFSA has allowed for little autonomy in the Alberta Section as an organizational unit. Nearly all of the programs described previously were initiated by the national Association and continue to be controlled by the national Board of Directors. By their nature, implementation of these programs occurs at the local level, but materials and supplies, record keeping, evaluation and program changes are done primarily at the national level. In turn, much of the authority regarding technical matters in officiating and competition, reside at the international level of the ISU. In the strictest sense, the only control that resides in the lower levels of figure skating, is termination: either work within the system and its rules and regulations, or cease to participate.

Most decisions made below the national level were maintenance types of decisions concerning administrative, not technical matters. For example, the Section could decide where and when to hold a judges clinic, but not what should be taught at that clinic. The Section must always operate within the rules of the CFSA. Two important administrative functions the national Association controlled were membership and sanctions. All members register through a skating club, which in turn registers them with the CFSA on an annual basis. Membership fees and specific data on each member are filed with the national office in Ottawa where the CFSA maintains computerized records. The Section receives a list of registered clubs and summary figures annually. A computer print out of the names and addresses of all members registered in the Section is available, but the Executive Director noted that it was more efficient for her to phone Ottawa for specific information than to maintain duplicate files. Since information to members is usually directed through the clubs, the Section does not have any particular need for names and addresses. The only skaters the Section has kept track of individually were the talented competitors who have been identified as candidates for financial support and special programs such as the Singles Seminar.

The second administrative task handled by the national office was sanctions. A sanction is broadly defined as "an approval by the Association of a skating event" (1700). Skating events include carnivals, exhibitions, competitions, seminars and publicity media appearances, as well as anything "whether open to the public or to club members only...if an admission is charged or if some financial benefit accrues to the organizers" (1701 (a)). The breadth of these sanctioning powers ensures that the CFSA has final approval for nearly any activity a skating club or section engages in beyond committee meetings, skating practices and test days. Fundraising and other promotional type activities would be particularly affected by this system of monitoring events. Most sanctions are routinely handled by the Executive Director of the CFSA on behalf of the Board. Unique requests are usually voted on by the members of the national Board. For example, a request to permit a precision team to perform between periods of a professional hockey game was decided by a mail ballot. One member explained the reason for sanctions, stating "it's just so that the CFSA knows what they're [sections and clubs] doing" (9:11). (An application fee of five to ten dollars also provides the CFSA with a further source of revenue.)

Budgetary control further demonstrates the centralized structure of the CFSA. Financially, the Alberta Section has been dependent upon two major funding sources: the CFSA and the provincial government. Although the CFSA does not prescribe how the Section's budget should be spent, each Section must submit audited financial statements to the Association. The Alberta Section must also submit audited statements to the provincial government under the Societies Act as a condition of receiving provincial funds. Thus, even though the Section has its own operating budget, spending is monitored and evaluated externally.

Although many decisions are made daily within the Alberta Section by executive committee members and paid staff, the majority of these decisions are programmed by organizational policies, rules and regulations that have been narrowly defined. One member of the executive explained that the Section is allowed to make decisions on its own, as long as these decisions are congruent with the Rulebook.

> They [CFSA Board] have found over the years that if we make a sort of decision relative to the operation of the Section, that unless it's really out in left field, they won't veto it. But they can. They have that right and they have the power. When you look at it from the influence part of making decisions, they would have to be up high because they are the ones that produce the Rulebook and that's what we have to go by. (1:20)

Problems that are not covered by the Rulebook are referred to the CFSA Rules Committee for a decision or for clarification.

The sections and individual clubs, are involved in the development of rules and regulations, but their role is limited. As described previously, rules are voted upon by delegates at the CFSA's Annual General Meeting and rule amendments that are brought to vote, originate from one of three sources: a club (every other year), a section or CFSA committee (any year), the ISU (any year). Clubs are limited to one representative each and sections are limited by the number of clubs in their area. A further factor is attendance at the AGM. The rotation for hosting the meeting is west, central, east, central and attendance from either the western or eastern sections depends largely upon the location as delegates pay their own expenses.[40] The proxy system enables sections like Alberta to maximize their representation as every delegate may carry up to five additional proxy votes. In the past, the Alberta Section executive have actively pursued proxy forms from clubs not sending delegates. However, Ontario and Quebec, having the largest skating populations and being in a central geographic location, tend to have the majority of votes.

The AGM is also used to elect members to the CFSA Board of Directors. These directors are responsible for developing Association policy and are the final authority in the enforcement of the rules and regulations (except in the case of international rules, in which case the ISU is the final arbitrator). Most of the Section executive members interviewed expressed the opinion that the strong central orientation of the CFSA was a consequence of the Board's composition. P.C. stated "of course the east has a lot more pull then the west because they have more votes and more directors" (2:15). During 1982-83, eight of thirteen elected Board members were from Ontario and Quebec in addition to eight non-elected members. A.M. summarized her perceptions of the CFSA Board and its influence on figure skating as follows:

> They run it. I'm sure you've gotten the same response from everyone. They are very powerful and we feel that they don't understand what's happening in the various provinces. They run it the way they want it to be in Ontario. (11:11)

Several members interviewed compared the political situation in the Association with that in the federal government. As M.M. stated:

> The majority of the people that sit on the national Board are from the province of Ontario and Quebec. They have more members and they are able to get their delegates there when it comes time to elect people to the Board. So therefore I say it's the same

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[40] A club will sometimes pay its delegate's expenses and a section may also set aside funds to help members attend.

type of political ball game as the federal politics. (3:14)

As the tone of these quotes suggest, there was dissatisfaction expressed over the amount of centralized control in the CFSA. However, the dissatisfaction was focused more on the membership of the power group than the location of authority at the top of the organization.

The highly centralized structure of the CFSA would seem to contradict the trend toward decentralized organizations recently suggested by analysts Peters and Waterman, Jr. (1982). It also contradicts research evidence suggesting that increases in organizational size relate to increased delegation or decentralization (Blau and Schoenherr, 1971). Further, the Aston work predicted that increased structuring of activity related to decentralized decision-making. One important factor in these apparent contradictions is the CFSA's relation with the ISU. Canadian Skaters could not compete internationally unless the CFSA was a "member in good standing" of the ISU. Thus, to achieve one of its major objectives, producing world calibre competitors, the CFSA must comply with ISU rules and standards. Standards in figure skating are set in order that the ultimate product, performance, can be measured and compared. The system for measuring that performance is subjective and depends upon trained officials who award marks for "technical merit" and "artistic impression". To reduce the large element of subjectivity and variability, rules are used to prescribe the basic mechanics of skating skills and prescribe which skills are to be performed when and for how long and in what order, etc. Conformity to these rules is mandatory for a skater to be even considered a serious competitor or test candidate. Choice is almost completely limited. Thus, the CFSA perceives that it must standardize programs nationally and control them nationally, to optimize its chances of developing elite athletes. The CFSA's orientation is reinforced by the federal government policy that is commited to elitism in amateur sport and by favourable media attention and public support toward excellence in figure skating.

Conformity to the rules and regulations of the CFSA is also mandatory for a club to maintain its membership status (1502). Membership in the Association may be suspended if the club breaches any rule of the CFSA. Just as the emphasis on compliance seems to be more important for the competitive skater as compared to the recreational skater, clubs that only offer NST instruction and are oriented toward the recreational skater have less to lose if their membership is suspended. This is because the NST program is available to non-CFSA members. However, most clubs that begin with the NST program, introduce CFSA Tests within a few years as their skaters progress. Therefore, it is unlikely that many club members (parents and skaters) would support a club executive that decided not to comply with CFSA rules. Either through the electoral process or by changing clubs, pressure from skaters and their parents further ensures compliance to the rules and regulations.

Not only are skaters and skating clubs required to comply with the rules, but volunteer administrators in each section and the CFSA are all required to comply or risk losing their membership status as well. Rule 1203 (a) states that "any member, including the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Board of Management and all Committee members, may be suspended or expelled by a two-thirds vote of the Annual General Meeting if such member has been found guilty of: (i) Having failed to abide by rules and regulations of the Association (ii) Conduct injurious to the sport of figure skating (iii) Becoming an undesirable member."

Finally, the CFSA has no real competition from other figure skating organizations in the country. Relatively few programs exist that teach figure skating without using a CFSA curriculum or CFSA trained instructors. Except for the recent phenomenon of professional figure skating competitions (which really only affect a handful of skaters), there are almost no alternatives for skaters wanting to compete other than through CFSA and ISU regulated events.

Configuration

The final structural dimension suggested by the Aston group is configuration. This refers to the shape of the organization as reflected by the number of role positions.

The Alberta Section exhibited a characteristic pyramidal structure (see Figure 2). The Executive Committee at the top of the Section was comprised of 21 role positions. The number of clubs was 177 and the bottom layer, individual members, totalled over 13,000. Further application of the configuration concept was difficult with the particular organization under investigation. Calculating the span of control, as indicated by the number of subordinates reporting to an immediate supervisor, was not appropriate to the volunteer labour situation of the Alberta Section's Executive Committee. Nor does the measurement of the ratio of direct workers to indirect workers seem suitable to an amateur sport organization. However, one measurement that may be revealing of the nature of the Alberta Section's structure, was the ratio of formal roles involved with CFSA test and competitive skating programs to formal roles involved with NST and recreational skating programs. Conceptualizing the pyramid from the perspective of two products, elite skaters and recreational skaters, there appeared to be a bulge in the shape of the Alberta Section in favour of the "elite" product. Of the Executive Committee positions involved in specific program areas, five positions were primarily to do with elite skaters: Chairmen of Judges, Accountants, Skaters' Development, Singles Seminar and Winter Games. A sixth position, Public Relations, primarily serviced the competitive skater but also performed activities that the recreational skater could benefit from, e.g., the newsletter. Only two positions, NST and Precision, were geared toward the recreational skater. Even Precision has has shown signs of becoming non-recreational as the focus has turned toward competitions and away from exhibitions as in the past. By eliminating the two, less clear cut role positions (Public Relations and Precision), the ratio of elite to recreationally oriented positions was five to one. Comparing this figure to the ratio of CFSA Test and competitive skaters to NST skaters, which is one to three, it would seem that the shape of the formal role positions reflected the Alberta Section's orientation toward the elite participant.

Summary

The organizational structure of the Alberta Section was examined using the schema suggested by the Aston group for analyzing the dimensions of specialization, formalization, standardization, centralization and configuration. It appears that the Alberta Section divided most of its work according to specialized areas and that the tasks were coordinated through an elaborate system of rules and procedures. The Section operated within a framework of policies, procedures and rules, almost all of which originated from outside the Alberta organization. The locus of decision making authority was highly centralized within the upper levels of the CFSA and the ISU. Finally, the orientation of organized figure skating toward the elite athlete was further evidenced in the shape of the Alberta Section's role structure in that a greater number of roles were related to programs and services for the more skilled participant.

The particular structural design of the Alberta Section has advantages and disadvantages for the organization. One advantage of a highly specialized division of work is that the role occupants are able to channel all of their energies and expertise into one activity area. This may be particularly important for an organization such as the Section which is dependent upon the work of volunteers. Since the work of the Section is largely performed by people in their spare time, specialization could be a more efficient utilization of time than having each individual perform many varied tasks. Given that the individuals concerned are dispersed throughout the province of Alberta and the NWT, such specialization is important because it is often more difficult for people working on a project to meet as often as necessary. A specified task area may also prove more attractive in the recruitment of volunteers, than would a broadly defined role position. Conversly, if areas become too defined, and if the qualifications and/or training requirements become too stringent, some volunteers will be detered from becoming involved.

Another consequence of specialization is the potential for signigicant differences in orientation among various specialists. Specialization may result in the orientation of members toward certain subgoals. This raises the possibility that the subgoals or orientations of the various program areas might take precedence over the organizational goals. Since the Executive Committee is also required to work together and make joint decisions regarding the operation of the Section and, in some cases, to shape policies, conflict between subgoals and the goals of the organization might affect the decisions and policies that result. In the Alberta Section, a higher proportion of Executive members are involved with programs oriented toward the competitive skater. This may be a reason for the Section's strong orientation toward the skilled participant.

Further problems created by a high degree of specialization are those of coordination, control and communication. In the Alberta Section, standardized rules and procedures are used as the major integrative mechanism. As Perrow (1979) noted, a source of stability in organizations stems from "the routinization of activity through the establishment of programs and standard operating procedures" (p. 144).

The CFSA Rulebook is a comprehensive document and serves as the "operating Bible" of figure skating. The same rules and procedures apply throughout Canada, and in the case of rules that pertain to amateur status, tests and competition, there is a high degree of international standardization. The rules provide an important means of protecting the amateur status of athletes. Another advantage of the high degree of standardization in the sport of figure skating is that people who are involved in one area of the country know what to expect if they move elsewhere.

The extent to which the standardization of figure skating has been documented, or formalized, is also important for the efficiency of the organization. Volunteer administrators tend to have a high rate of turnover, and new role incumbents should be able to perform their job sooner as a result of the materials available. The geographic dispersion of volunteer administrators emphasizes the importance of documentation both as a means of communication and as a source of information.

There are several limitations of the highly standardized and formalized nature of the Alberta Section. The first disadvantage is that there is almost no room for variation or flexibility. This is especially problematic in that the same procedures, rules and regulations are applied nationally, with little regard for regional differences. Even within the Alberta Section there is a wide variation among the zones, as to the particular needs of area clubs. For example, one zone has difficulty in getting judges, while another has an abundance of officials. There is a further distinction between rural clubs and urban clubs. The former tend to be oriented toward NST programs and the latter tend to be more focussed on competition. Since there is a strong orientation toward the test and competitive skater within the programming concerns of the CFSA, many of the rules, regulations and procedures that the NST club must comply with, may not be relevant or may be in conflict with the characteristics and needs of that club.

Although the examples given above were specific to clubs, the situation with regard to standardization really begins at the ISU. Canada must be in line with other countries, even though there are many differences among the member countries of the ISU. For example, Canada and the USSR have different political systems which have implications for state support of individual athletes; however, both countries must comply to the same definition of amateur status. Thus, Canadian athletes are limited financially because state support is minimal and most other means of support, such as sponsorship, are highly restricted by the amateur status rules. Whereas athletes in the USSR are strongly supported financially by the state and can maintain their amateur status, although many western countries would declare those athletes as professionals.

Standardization, from the international level all the way down to the individual skater, does not allow for tailoring the rules, regulations and procedures to the local conditions and needs of each particular country's, sections, clubs or skaters.

A high degree of standardization tends to hamper creativity. The routine application of procedures not only ignores alternatives, but in fact precludes them because of the stated rules and regulations. Also, there is no built in system which encourages innovation. Hage and Aiken (1970) found that high levels of innovation related to high specialization, low formalization and decentralization of power.

Along with the limitations for creative decision making, the process for changing rules is slow. Perrow (1979) contends that "the greatest problem with rules is that organizations and their environments change faster than rules. Most bad rules were once good, designed for a situation that no longer exists" (p. 30). It is an unfortunate consequence of the democratic process that it tends to be very slow to change. This is particularly true of a volunteer organization which meets only once a year to decide on major policy and rule changes. As a result, many of the rules and procedures in existence are carry-overs from earlier in the Association's history, and are no longer as relevant to the present situation.

That there is a measureable amount of movement and progression within the Canadian figure skating system each year, is partly due to the fourth structural dimension examined in this study, and that is centralization. Although the membership has input (via the AGM), into the Association's major policies and rule changes, a significant amount of decision making authority is delegated to the CFSA Board of Directors. The Board is the top level of the hierarchy in Canadian figure skating, thus the Association tends to be highly centralized in its structure. Centralized control is closely linked to the emphasis on standardization. An advantage of centralization on organizational processes suggested by Melcher (1975) is that there can be greater coordination as a result of the central direction and uniform application of policies. However, the consequence of this, as discussed previously, is that variations between regions are ignored.

A second advantage which could offset the likelihood of one group, or section, getting ahead at the expense of others, is that the national Board must consider the good of the Association as a whole in making its decisions. Unfortunately, the composition of the CFSA Board has tended to favour representation of the Ontario and Quebec sections and the Alberta Section members in this study expressed concern that decisions were being made to the advantage of those central sections.

A third advantage/disadvantage suggested by Melcher (1975), relates to the speed of decision making. He notes that in emergencies, the central decision makers can gather information and make decisive decisions more quickly. However, under normal conditions, decisions which must be referred to a central body are delayed by the processes for sending information up and decisions down the hierarchy. A good example in figure skating is the sanctioning procedure. Clubs and the Section must plan well in advance for any event that requires a Sanction since the procedure involves at least two weeks to process. Thus, this limits the local organizations from being able to respond to opportunities that arise quite suddenly.

Consideration must also be given to the amount of organizational development that has occurred within the Alberta Section since it was formed in 1969. During that time the Section's membership has grown significantly and its budget has escalated. Both of these factors have greatly improved the Section's viability as a provincial or regional arm of the CFSA. The opening of a staffed office was particularly critical to the Section's ability to function as a service organization. Unfortunately, the CFSA did not respond to these developments by decentralizing certain functions and administrative responsibilities to the Section. Thus, although the Section is in a better position to respond to the particular needs and interests of members within its jurisdiction and it has both the organizational framework and the resources to accomplish this goal, it lacks important decision making autonomy. Therefore, the Section's potential for fulfilling its objectives is underutilized.

G. Interorganizational Relationships of the Alberta Section

Organizations interact with other groups, individuals and organizations in their environment. Hall (1982) labeled this segment of an organization's environment the specific environment and suggested it had immediate relevance for the focal unit. One purpose of this study was to identify which other organizations the Alberta Section interacted with, and secondly, to analyze the structure of these relations. The structure of the various interorganizational relationships of the Section was analyzed using the four dimensions suggested by Marrett (1971) and Aldrich (1979): formalization, intensity, reciprocity, and standardization.

All relations of a particular organization comprise an organizational set (Evan, 1966). The majority of organizations with which the Section interacted were involved in similar activities and cooperative interaction generally characterized these relations. The most important non-skating organization with which the Section was in contact was the provincial government's Department of Recreation and Parks. The set of the Alberta Section is presented in Figure 10. The structure of the Sections's relations with other organizations was analyzed using four bivariate dimensions. The findings are described below.

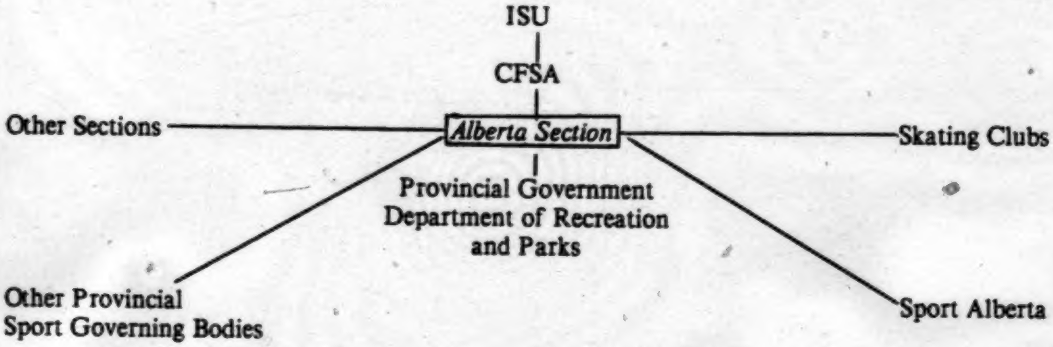

Figure 10: The Organizational
Set of the Alberta Section

Formalization

The first dimension, formalization, concerns the degree to which organizations use formalized agreements to govern their interrelationships. The relationships of the Alberta Section with skating clubs, zones/regions, other sections, the CFSA and the ISU were all legislated in the Rulebook and in the constitutions and by-laws of the groups concerned. Slack (1983, p. 292) noted that since voluntary organizations are prone to a lack of stability, legislated agreements may provide some degree of stability. Instability created by high executive turnover may be somewhat offset by formalized agreements which provide incoming executive members with the framework for structuring important interactions.

Of the twelve other sections in Canada, Alberta's relationships with the three western sections were more formalized. Geographic proximity and the divisional championship system were factors which encouraged a closer relationship among the western sections. Exchanging officials between provinces occurred on occassion, although this was limited by financial constraints related to travel and accomodation costs. The main link between the sections however, was in terms of the Divisional Championships. The divisionals rotate among the four sections annually, requiring a cooperative effort to stage. The specific activities and responsibilities of the sections comprising each division in Canada were detailed in the Rulebook. One feature of the relationship was the formation of a Divisional Championship Committee comprised of section Chairmen from each section in the division. This committee works with the Host Club Championship Committee to organize the event.

The structural aspect of relationships is a second part of the formalization dimension. Structural formalization refers to the presence of an intermediary organization which coordinates or controls the interactions between one or more organization. The responsibility or authority of these intermediary structures varies with some serving primarily an advisory function and others having the power to make binding decisions. There were several examples of structural formalization in the Alberta Section's relations including the Divisional Championships Committee previously discussed. The zone structure also served as an intermediary between clubs and Section. Through its elected representatives, zones performed an advisory and liason function. Similarly, the Section Executive Committee itself operated as a liason between Alberta/NWT clubs and the CFSA. The Section was also responsible for making certain binding decisions. The CFSA mediated between Canadian figure skating organizations and the ISU, while the ISU coordinated relations among all countries involved in competitive figure skating. In domestic issues the CFSA had the power to make binding decisions, whereas the ISU had the decision-making authority for matters concerning international tests and competitions.

The CFSA also acted as mediator between the Canadian skating community and several federal agencies such as Sport Canada and non-government organizations such as the COA. Although no direct interaction occurred between the Alberta Section and these other organizations, nor between the Section and the ISU, each has an impact upon many activities in the Section. Emery and Trist (1968) referred to this element of an organization's environment as the "causal texture" and suggested it contributes greatly to the amount of uncertainty facing the organization. For example, as described previously, pressure from Sport Canada resulted in the Association amalgamating the professional coaches group with the CFSA. The CFSA initially placed the responsibility for ensuring coaches registered with the Association onto the executive of each Section. Since there was general resistance on the part of Alberta's professional coaches, the Section was put into a difficult situation with no choice but to comply with the Association's position. Thus, the Alberta Section was vulnerable to changes in the causal texture of its environment. This vulnerability is a result of the centralized structure of the CFSA which dictates most decisions to the Section and the Section's dependence on resources provided by the Association.

The Alberta Section had formalized exchanges with non-skating organizations as well, foremost of which was the provincial Department of Recreation and Parks. The Rulebook gave each section the authority to enter into financial agreements with their provincial government, so long as the rules, objects and policies of the Association were not compromised (1223 (e)). Formal agreement between the Alberta Section and the Department was constituted in the Profile Grant Application form which set out the terms of the relationship. Provincial government policy on amateur sport was also a basis for structuring interactions between the Department and the Section.

Employees of the Department acted as consultants and work with provincial sport and recreation associations to assist them with their application as well as advising them on other sources of funding. Although the Section must apply annually for provincial funds, the situation is much more stable and economically favourable than before the provincial government began committing itself to supporting sport and recreation associations and instituted the Profile Grant system in 1978. The Section can make a reasonable estimate of grant monies it will receive from the province based on the previous amount received. This has been important for budget preparation especially since awarding of Profile Grants occurs after the beginning the Section's fiscal year (April 1).

The Section has a formalized agreement with Sport Alberta, the federation of provincial sport governing bodies. Sport Alberta functions as a unified voice in negotiations with the province and in cooperative ventures such as the Alberta Winter Games. The federation also serves as a forum for interaction among the various provincial organizations involved in amateur sport.

The Alberta Section also had informal relations with other provincial sport bodies, particularly those housed in the Percy Page Centre where the office and staff are located. The Executive Director explained that she interacted with paid employees of other sports on an individual basis. Common reasons for interaction were to discuss government mandates affecting amateur sport or to exchange information, particularly with regard to alternative sources of funding.

Finally, the Section has occasionally been involved on an informal basis with other groups or organizations that require ice arena facilities. "Ice users", as they are collectively referred to, include municipal recreation programs, community leagues, minor hockey, ringette, and broomball. However, interactions between other ice users and skating organizations occur mostly at the club level and in some instances, at the zone level. For example, the Edmonton Zone belongs to an Ice Users' Committee comprised of representatives from all the major ice users in the city. This committee meets to share information and to attempt to provide for fair useage of facilities. Liasons among ice using organizations may become more important in the future. Arenas are expensive to operate and very few clubs own their own facilities. Ten years ago the primary group with whom figure skating shared ice time was hockey. However, ringette and broomball are increasing in popularity and adult participation is also increasing in all four sports. As figure skating is placed in the position of having to compete more and more with other organizations for facilities, the Section may have to become involved in the negotiations. Another factor that may affect figure skating's ability to secure ice time in the future is that many municipalities are encouraging the privatization of ice facilities. This may mean that figure skating clubs will have to join with other ice using groups to buy facilities from municipalities. A potential outcome of this is that the ice costs for the individual skater may skyrocket. Minor hockey and other team ice sports are much more "economical" in that a greater number of participants are on the ice for a fewer number of sessions.

Intensity

Marrett (1971) contended that "not only do relations differ in the extent of their formality; they diverge, too, on the involvement involved" (p. 91). This second dimension of interorganizational relations is termed "intensity". Two indicators of intensity are the size of the resource exchanged and the frequency of interaction.

The Alberta Section's interactions with other organizations varied with regard to both size and frequency of exchange. To begin with, the Section's three major resources were: human (as in the staffing/organizing of programs); informational; and financial. In most of its relationships, the Section's main investment was in terms of human and informational resources. The largest portion of both sources were used to benefit Section clubs and skaters. In providing services to its member clubs, the Section was also meeting most of its obligations to the CFSA and the provincial government. The Section's smallest investment of resources was made to other provincial sport organizations, Sport Alberta and the ISU. As well, the Section provided almost no direct funding to other organizations, including skating clubs. However, nearly all of the Section's finances were used to provide services to the members in general. Actually, it is difficult, if not impossible, to discern the relative proportion of the Section's investment in its relations with other organizations because of the problems associated with measurement of non-monetary resources. This is particularly true given that the Section is run mostly on volunteered time and it is impossible to place a dollar figure on this.

The second aspect of intensity is frequency of interaction. Although frequent contact may be casual, it is probable that frequent interactions use more of an organization's resources than do infrequent interactions.

The Executive Director of the Section estimated that she telephoned the Association's Ottawa office at least once a week, but that mail between the Section and the CFSA was exchanged daily. Personal contact, in the form of meetings, occurred less frequently. The

Section Chairman attended four or five meetings of the CFSA Board each year. Depending upon their position, other Executive Committee members interviewed for this study varied in the frequency of contact with the CFSA. Most interactions were in written form and as described earlier, much of this was in the form of standardized reports to the CFSA or informational memos from the CFSA to Section executive members.

The frequency of contact between clubs and the Section office was best captured in the 1983 Christmas list for individuals working at the Percy Page Centre. To the Executive Director, Santa was requested to bring a third ear for her to be able to keep up with phone calls.

> I quess my most basic chore is running the office and being an answering service mostly and a contact between the executive and the clubs...we answer a lot of questions and disseminate a lot of information to the clubs. (4:3)

Contact between individual executive members and the clubs was also frequent as a result of the large proportion of executive who are CFSA officials. One member, when asked how much time she spent judging, replied "go ask my husband, he probably keeps better track than me! There again it depends on the time of year. Towards the end of March I was out 14 days in a row judging from four to six hours [per day]. But then you'll go through two months where you're only out once or twice" (6:5). Zone Directors were also in a position of frequent interaction with skating clubs. One Zone Director estimated that she received three to four calls an evening from area clubs.

The frequency of interaction between the Section and the provincial government varied according to the time of year. Again, the main party involved in these contacts was the Executive Director, and secondly, the Secretary-Treasurer. Interaction typically corresponded with the Section's application for funds or other kinds of support and therefore, more frequent contact occurred during February and March when the Profile Grant applications were due. General informational types of interchange occurred throughout the year.

As Hall (1982) points out, "the more intense the relationship, the more important it is for the organizations involved" (p. 256). Based on this, the Section's most important relations were with the CFSA and skating clubs within the Section's jurisdiction. However, the provincial government's relation with the Section was also very significant, for the Section at least, and its importance may be better understood in regard to the third dimension Marrett (1971) and Aldrich (1979) identified: reciprocity.

Reciprocity

In an exchange between organizations, one party may be in a position to have greater influence on the terms of the relationship than does the other. The degree of reciprocity concerns the extent to which the elements are mutually exchanged and secondly, the extent to which the terms of the exchange are mutually reached.

The interactions of the Alberta Section with other skating organizations differed greatly in both the content of exchange and the direction. The CFSA provided substantial funding, programs and administrative support to the Section. In return, the Section operated the programs, providing the actual services to the clubs and their skaters. The clubs were in effect the third party and the CFSA and the Section engaged in a joint relationship, with the clubs as the beneficiaries of that exchange. Although the direction of the exchange was "joint", to use the terminology suggested by Levine and White (1961), the contributions made by each party were different and the terms were not mutually agreed upon. The CFSA provides the greater financial contribution, while the Section's main resource contributions were human and informational. The Section also provided, or attempted to provide, more abstract resources such as the support and promotion of organizational goals and objectives, loyalty and conformity.

The terms of the relationships among clubs, the Section and the CFSA were mutually agreed upon in the sense that clubs and Section executive have a vote at the CFSA AGM, where organizational policy and rule changes evolve. However, these terms were not worked out on an individual basis between each section and the national Association and every single club; rather, the same terms define relationships across the country. Further, since these terms were initiated early in the Section's history, and changes to Association policies and rules occur slowly, it would be more accurate to state that the terms of resource investment exist for the parties to conform to.

The degree of reciprocity in the Alberta Section's relations with the provincial government was somewhat unilateral. That is, the Section benefits more as a result of the province's financial support, than does the province as a result of the Section's service to the public. Since the Section is only one of the many recreation and sport associations supported by the province, the loss of the Section's services would only be felt by a small proportion of Alberta's public. Further, the Section would, in all likelihood, continue to service the citizens of Alberta without provincial funds. This is not to imply that the province's financial contribution is not important relative to the quality and quantity of services that are realized.

As one might expect, the party making the greater investment, in this case the provincial Department of Parks and Recreation, has the greater influence toward determining the conditions of the exchange. The provincial government decided the type of grants it will make available, the amount of funds or other support mechanisms that will be provided, the methods that will be used for evaluating associations' eligibility to receive these grants and so on. These decisions were not made arbitrarily but were based upon research and input on behalf of the groups affected. However, the conditions of the Profile Grant system apply to over 60 recipient groups and associations and therefore, cannot be tailored to the particular characteristics or requirements of any one group.

The most symmetrical of the Alberta Section's relations were those with other provincial sport organizations and these were largely based on the sharing of information. As well, the Section's relations with other western Canadian sections were reciprocal. However, the terms of exchange among sections were determined by the Rulebook and not as a mutual arrangement between individual sections.

Standardization

The final dimension for analyzing the structure of an organization's relationships with other organizations, is standardization. Standardization refers to the extent to which the units of exchange and procedures for exchange are clearly delineated. The Rulebook was the primary mechanism for standardizing the Section's interrelations with the CFSA, clubs and other sections. It also provided guidelines for the Section to structure its relations with other unspecified organizations it might be required to interact with. The procedures or rules for exchange in these relations were more explicit than were the units exchanged. Given that many of the elements exchanged among the various skating organizations were not concrete, including such immeasurable agreements as hosting a particular even or promoting an organizational goal, and the instability of financial resources within any volunteer or service type organization, it was not surprising that the unites of exchange were only partially specified. Committee composition, percentage of registration refund and various fee structures were some of the more concrete items that could be, and were, precisely defined.

The units of exchange between the provincial government and the Section were partially standardized. Once a decision to allocate funds to the Section was made, the units of exchange on the part of the government were quite specific: "x" dollars. The exchange elements provided by the Section, services, were less concrete and fixed. However, they were defined to the extent that the Profile Grant application required the Section to make a detailed three year plan itemizing such things as the expected number of clinics and competitions they would sponsor, how many officials or coaches they intended to certify and so forth. The Section's subsequent application provided the government with a report on the previous year's activities and thus served as an evaluation tool for the government. As well, the Section's audited financial statements provided further evidence of where the Section's finances were directed.

As Marrett (1971) contented, "standard procedures are somewhat more likely when the exchange relation is formally recognized than when it is informal" (p. 95). The Section's less formalized relations with other provincial sport groups did not appear to be standardized.

Summary

From the preceding description of how the Alberta Section's relationships with other organizations were structured, it can be seen that the specific environment influences and constrains the behavior of the Alberta Section. In fact, it would be impossible to understand the behavior of the Section, without understanding the Section's relations with the CFSA.

The Alberta Section depends on its environment for many of its resources including finances, services and information. The major source of resources for the Section has been the CFSA but the provincial government has become an increasingly important source of financial and service support. In exchange, the Section has human or personnel resources, as well as informational and certain financial resources to offer these and other organizations.

The Section's relationship with the CFSA is highly formalized and standardized through the Association's Rulebook and that same document prescribes a framework for the Section's interactions with other organizations. Although the Section did maintain relations with a few non-figure skating organizations, most of its interactions were with similar organizations. These relations tended to be characterized by cooperation rather than competition.

Of the non-skating organizations with which the Section had formalized relations, the provincial government had the strongest position from which to effect the Section because of its sizeable financial investment. However, in this investigation, there was nothing to suggest that the Alberta Section has been constrained by the program priorities of the provincial government. The Section's enhanced budget has contributed to the scope and quality of services that could be provided to its members, but the fundemental nature and orientation of these services does not appear to have been changed, as yet, by the greater role of the Alberta government.

In summary, the examination of the Alberta Section's interorganizational set emphasized the importance of examining how other organizations affect the behavior of the Section. In fact, it is questionable whether the Section could function independently of other interest groups.

V. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to undertake an exploratory and descriptive analysis of an amateur sport organization. The organization which was selected for analysis was the Alberta Section of the Canadian Figure Skating Association. The three research questions addressed in this study were as follows:

1. What are the structural characteristics of the Alberta Section?
2. What is the nature of the Alberta Section's environment?
3. How are environmental factors related to structural characteristics of the Alberta Section?

The data for this study were produced through interviews with fourteen individuals intimately involved in the administration of the Alberta Section. Additional information was obtained by examining records and publications of the Alberta Section, and finally, by observation techniques at the Section office and at executive and general meetings. Content analysis of the data was used to organize the information. A conceptual framework used to interpret the findings of this study, was based on the literature specific to organizational structure and organizational environments.

Structural characteristics were examined in relation to five dimensions operationalized by the Aston group in England. These dimensions were specialization, formalization, standardization, centralization and configuration. The nature of the environment was investigated firstly by identifying general conditions impacting on the organization as suggested by Hall (1982). Seven general conditions included technological, legal, political, economic, demographic, ecological and cultural factors. Secondly, the specific environment was examined by analyzing the interorganizational set of the Alberta Section. Interorganizational relationships in the set were described in relation to the four dimensions suggested by Marrett (1971) and Aldrich (1979). These dimensions were formalization, intensity, reciprocity and standarization.

B. Summary

The first question with which this study was concerned was to describe the structural characteristics of the Alberta Section. The findings of this study have shown that the Alberta Section divides its work into highly specialized tasks and that these tasks are coordinated through an elaborate system of rules and procedures which have been narrowly defined. The Section operates within the framework of policies, procedures and rules which, to a great extent, originate from the parent organization. The Section's parent organization, the CFSA, is the main decision-making body for figure skating in Canada. In turn, the CFSA complies with the rules and regulations of the international governing body for the sport, the ISU. Thus, the authority structure for decision-making is highly centralized.

Choice, or lack of choice, seemed to be an important factor for understanding the particular structural design of the Alberta Section. The degree of influence exercised by decision makers in other organizations, on the activities of the Alberta Section, was important to understanding the behavior of that organization. Other environmental contingencies such as the political and economic climate, were also seen to have had some influence on the organizational development of the Alberta Section.

The nature of the organizational environment of the Alberta Section was examined in this study. The environment was conceptualized as having two segments: the general and the specific environments. The general environment comprises conditions which have potential relevance for the focal organization. The specific environment, which has immediate relevance, includes other organizations, individuals and groups directly interacting with the focal organization.

The impact of Hall's (1982) seven general environmental conditions on the Alberta Section was investigated through an analysis of the historical development of the Section. This research has shown that the Section has, during the course of its development, been effected by two conditions in particular: economics and politics. The Alberta Section was formed in 1969 and during its first eight years, experienced rapid growth in membership. The increased population of the province, combined with the economic prosperity of the early seventies, provided a favourable environment for the sport of figure skating to grow. The early seventies were also a period of political change as first the federal government and then the provincial governments, began to take an active role in the support and development of sport and leisure pursuits. As a result, the Alberta Section began a period of significant revenue growth around 1976. More financial support was also forthcoming from the national Association. Together, these two sources of funding provided the Alberta Section with an operating budget which enabled it to significantly expand its programs and services. One of the most important actions the Alberta Section was able to undertake as a result of its increased income, was the establishment of an office staffed by one full and one part-time employee. The Section's commitment to developing potential competitive skaters, also benefitted from the rise in revenues.

However, as easily as the economic prosperity of the early to midseventies positively influenced the growth of the Alberta Section, the economic recession of the late seventies and early eighties has been a factor in the leveling off of that growth. Firstly, the economy effects the individual skater. The costs related to participation are quite high in comparison to other sports that are less dependent on expensive facilities, specialized equipment and instruction fees for coaches. Since fees are the basis of the Section's budgeted allocation from the CFSA, declining enrollment is immediately felt by the Section. Declining enrollment in other sections also has an indirect effect on the Alberta Section, as it is related to the CFSA's operating budget and the amount of money the national office can spend in servicing the sections and their clubs. Further, the Section's costs related to travel and accomodation for executive meetings, and other operating expenses such as telephone, postage and office supplies, have all increased with inflation. The Section is obliged to provide certain services to its members, but some programs can operate on a break even basis or be discontinued altogether. One consequence of the declining economy is that more and more of a financial burden for programs will probably be placed onto the sections and the individual clubs. A drawback of this, is that the stronger sections and clubs may be in a better position to absorb extra costs and thus continue to grow, while the smaller, less well-off sections and clubs, may only get smaller. Apart from the question of whether more of the costs can be absorbed by the sections and the clubs, is whether the CFSA will be able to maintain national control of the organization, as it has in the past, or whether the sections and the clubs will demand more authority and autonomy to go along with their greater program responsibilities.

In addition to identify general environmental conditions, this study examined the specific environment comprised of the interorganizational relationships of the Alberta Section. The organizational set of the Alberta Section was identified and relationships between the Section and members of the set were analyzed. Marrett (1971) had suggested that "the larger the size of the resources the greater the likelihood of there being formalization of agreement, standardization, and reciprocity of exchange" (p. 96). The findings of this study showed that the Alberta Section's most intense relationships in terms of resource commitments, were highly formalized and standardized. Rather than reciprocal exchange, the Sections relations with both the CFSA and the provincial government's Department of Recreation and Parks, were characterized by joint exchanges benefiting the membership of the Section. Although less intense and standardized, the Section's relations with other skating organizations were formalized both through agreements and structurally, through the use of intermediary organizations.

A further finding of this study with regard to the interorganizational relations, was the low degree to which the Section was involved in structuring the terms of these relations. That is, the Section was only minimally involved in negotiating the terms of its relations with the provincial government, the skating clubs, other sections and the CFSA. For the most part, the Section's relations were mandated by the Association's Rulebook. Secondly, the structure of the province's relations had been primarily developed by the government and were set to apply to the large number and variety of sport and recreation associations with which the Department of Recreation and Parks is involved. Thus, in two key relationships, the Section's role in structuring the relations was minimal.

C. Conclusions

One of the reasons this study was undertaken was the lack of information about the day to day workings of amateur sport organizations. It was deemed essential that a descriptive base be built in order that particular organizational phenomenon could be studied in a sport setting. Therefore, a descriptive analysis of an organization in its context, was considered to be an important progression toward building such a base.

The examination of only one organization may limit the degree to which findings are generalizable to other amateur sport groups. However, certain conclusions can be drawn which could be applied to similar organizations. Furthermore, the appropriateness of the conceptual framework used in this study can be evaluated and proposals for future study can be recommended.

The first research area dealt with in this study was the structural design of the Alberta Section. The Aston model for analyzing an organization's structure according to five dimensions was a useful tool for this purpose. Although the original concepts were developed and applied to work organizations, the operational definitions were applicable to a non-working setting such as existed in the Alberta Section. The only dimension which was problematic was configuration. The voluntary nature of the organization made it difficult to apply notions such as span of control and personnel percentages. However, the other four dimensions provided a valuable framework for identifying and evaluating the various elements of structure in a meaningful way.

The data in this study showed that the three dimensions indicative of activity structure--specialization, formalization and standardization--were each manifested to a high degree. Paradoxically, the Alberta Section's decision making authority was highly centralized and much of the actual control over the organization was exercised by the parent organization. In part, this can be explained by tradition, that is, the CFSA has always been a highly centralized organization and continues to be accepted as such by the members. Further, a strong national organization is looked upon as necessary, by much of the membership, for producing elite competitors to represent Canada internationally. Another possibility, and one which the present study was unable to address, is that the emergent structure within the club level of the Association, may in fact be highly decentralized and thus, the members who are largely involved at this lower level of the hierarchy, do have much more autonomy than is perceived by examining the section level of the hierarchy. The major conclusion drawn from this finding was that the centralized control limited the Section's ability to respond to the particular needs and interests of its members.

The second research area dealt with in this study was the nature of the Alberta Section's environment. Hall's (1982) model, which identified seven conditions in the general environment having potenial relevance on an organizaiton, was used in an analysis of the Section's historical development. This model was useful for identifying the various factors that influenced the Section. Certain conditions were more important than others, and some conditions were less applicable under the circumstances. In particular, political and economic factors were and continued to be important sources of constraint and opportunity for the Alberta Section. Thus, it is recommended that both of these factors should be given careful consideration in any analysis of amateur sport organizaitons. The conclusion that can be drawn from this aspect of the study is that the environment of amateur sport groups is important for understanding its development and continued existence.

The nature of the Alberta Section's interorganizational relationships was also considered within the concept of environmental contingencies. Marrett's (1971) and Aldrich's (1979) model for analyzing the structure of these relationships was found to be a meaningful method for description. This approach was useful for explaining some of the actions of the Alberta Section. One criticism however, is that a network approach, rather than a set approach, would have provided a more lucid explanation of the relationships among the organizations identified. A network analysis would focus on the properties of the network of interacting organizations rather than any one organization in it.

The most important conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that one cannot analyze an organization such as the Alberta Section without extensive knowledge of the parent organization. By virtue of the international competitive system, the Section was intrinsically bound to the CFSA, just as the CFSA was bound to the ISU. Although the critical link, and raison d'etre for that link, was the competitive component of figure skating, the non-competitive or recreational component was influenced as well. The effect of this linkage was that most of what occurred within the Alberta Section was a consequence of actions imposed from outside that body. Further, the internal structure of the Alberta Section, was a reflection of that influence. Work was specialized according to areas defined largely by the programs and objectives of the national level. Rules and procedures were also defined and controlled nationally and thus lacked any regional flexibility. Thus, since other amateur sport organizations are involved in national and international competitive systems, the structural characteristics manifested by the Alberta Section may be found in other amateur sport organizations.

In summary, some conclusions can be drawn from this study that have relevance to similar organizations. Further, the methodological approach undertaken and the particular models used in developing a conceptual framework for collecting and analyzing the data, were deemed to be appropriate to the research questions addressed in this study.

D. Recommendations

Based on the information gathered in this study, the following are four recommended areas for further research.

1. A comparison of structural characteristics among organizations with different sport disciplines should be undertaken to determine whether the sport specific differences are a source of variation in organizational structure.
2. The relationship of the formal structure to the informal structure of an amateur sport

organization should be examined.

3. Changes in the goals and objectives of amateur sport organizations over long periods of time should be examined in view of the changing priorities of various funding agencies for sport.
4. A comparison among various amateur sport organizations should be undertaken to determine whether similar conditions in the general environment have different consequences for these organizations.

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APPENDIX A

Glossary of Terms

Accountant: An accountant is an official in charge of tabulating the judges marks and determining the final placing of competitors.

Alberta Section: This refers to the Alberta/NWT Section of the Canadian Figure Skating Association, an organization whose area of operations is within the geographic boundaries of the Province of Alberta with administrative assistance provided to CFSA designated clubs in the NWT.

Amateur: "An amateur in skating is a person who participates in the sport as an avocation, for pleasure and not as a means of livelihood" (2201 (a)).

Amateur Coach: An amateur coach is an individual who instructs in the NST program of a skating club and who is an amateur.

Canadian Championships: This is the national competition for amateur figure skaters who qualify via the Divisional Championships. Senior, Junior and Novice events contested in the Canadians include men's and women's singles, pairs and dance categories.

Canadian Figure Skating Association: Abbreviated to CFSA or the Association this organization is "a duly elected member of the International Figure Skating Union and as such holds and exercises jurisdiction over figure skating in Canada" (1101).

CFSA Official Rulebook: This is the primary document of the Association. It includes the rules and regulations governing the operation of the CFSA, Sections, and clubs, officiating, competition, amateur status, skating skills and requirements for free skate, figures, dance, pairs, NST and Power Skating tests.

Coaching Association of Canada: Abbreviated to CAC, this is a federally incorporated non-profit organization responsible for the development of coaching effectiveness across Canada. The majority of CAC's funding is derived from Sport Canada.

Dance: Dance involves partners performing a variety of skating patterns around the ice, but does not include jumps, spins or lifts.

Divisional Championships: For the purpose of qualifying skaters to compete in the Canadian Championships, the sections are grouped into four divisions. Each division organizes a competition comprised of the same events as are included in the national competition.

Figures: Figures involves skating tracings based on the figure eight.

Figure Skating Coaches of Canada: Abbreviated to FSCC, this was the national umbrella organization for professional figure skating coaches in Canada until 1982-83 when they merged with the CFSA.

Free Skate: Free skate involves a single skater performing jumps and spins to a piece of music.

International Skating Union: Abbreviated to ISU, this is the international organization responsible for governing figure skating and speed skating. This body controls international competition and represents skating in the organization of international games such as the

Winter Olympics.

Judges: A judge is an official who marks the performance of figure skaters who are either competing or trying CFSA tests.

National Coaches Certification Program: Abbreviated to NCCP, this program is primarily designed and instituted by the CAC. Its purpose is to develop the level of coaching within Canada through a program of instruction and certification.

National Skating Tests: Abbreviated to NST, this is the CFSA's program for instructing and testing beginners in the fundemental skating skills. In 1983-84 this program was restructured and renamed CanSkate and CanFigure Skate.

Pairs: Pairs involves free skate with a partner and includes lifts.

Precision: Involving groups of up to 20 skaters performing on the ice simultaniously, precision is similar to the chorus line in dance.

Professional Coach: Often referred to as the "pro", this is an individual who teaches figure skating for renumeration.

Profile Grant: Provincial recreation and sport associations can complete a profile and application for financial assistance from the Province of Alberta's Department of Recreation and Parks. Groups may receive grants up to $40,000 annually to assist with administration, leadership development and program development.

Referee: A referee is a qualified figure skating judge who supervises the technical aspects of preparation for and conduct of tests and competitions.

Sanction: Official approval for a variety of events including carnivals, exhibitions, publicity media appearances and competitions, is granted in the form of a "sanction". Sanctioning requires that the organizers apply to the Association for permission to stage an event. A standard form and application fee must be sent to Ottawa two weeks prior to the scheduled event. There are four and a half pages of rules and regulations prescribing which events are to be sanctioned, who may participate, how the Association must be acknowledged in advertisements and programs that pertain to the event, and so on. Failure to sanction an event, or to comply with the rules governing sanctions, results in disciplinary action which may include loss of membership in the Association or of a skater's amateur status.

Sectional Championships: Each section is required to hold a competition to qualify skaters to the Divisional Championships.

Singles: A term used to refer to a competitve event for men and women that includes elements of figures and free skate.

Skate-In: The Alberta Section's administrative workshop for skating club executives, usually held every other year.

World Championships: The "Worlds" is the supreme international event staged annually by the ISU and a host country to decide the top senior competitors in men's and women's singles, dance and pairs skating.

APPENDIX B

Summary and Evaluation of the Alberta Section's Three Year Plan

The Alberta Section's three year plan for 1982, 1983 and 1984 was organized into three areas: administration, leadership and programs. These specific areas corresponded to the requirements of the Provincial Government's Profile Grant Application. For each area or sub-area a goal was outlined and various "action" plans were itemized. (Some of these goals were restatements of the Section's objects from its Constitution and By-Laws.) Some actions were general such as "to encourage any communities showing an interest to become members of the Canadian Figure Skating Association". Other actions were more specific such as "by February of 1982 to offer judges a clinic in each of the zones at each of the levels mentioned above in (1) and (2). This is to ensure that each judge will have 2 clinics at the level he requires as per national association guidelines." The first year of the plan, 1982, was much more comprehensive than were each of the subsequent years. Projected budgets for each year of the plan were also included. Thus, the Section's three year development plan qualifies as a strategic plan in that long range goals were identified, activities to achieve those goals were selected and resources were allocated to those activities.

Overall, the nature of the Section's strategic plan reflected a very cautious inventory of what the organization had been doing in the past and expected to continue to do in the future. There was almost no change in the type of activities, programs or issues the Section intended to address over three years and there was only marginal expansion within these areas. The goals were not priorized and, thus, did not provide a basis for allocating resources. Such an omission is particulary critical for organizations such as the Alberta Section, which has limited and unstable resources, and should obviously be rectified if at all possible. Further, the goals themselves tended to be abstract. For example, the Section's goal statement for administration was as follows:

> The goal of the Alberta Section C.F.S.A. is to improve, encourage, and advance figure skating on ice in all its clubs and to provide standards for it's [sic] members and generally, to take all steps necessary or desirable to regulate figure skating throughout

the Section.

This may be problematic for the Section since abstract goals are difficult to measure in terms of performance or achievement. Goals related to program development and participation are measureable in terms of the quantity of activities offered and the number of members, but the quality of instruction or the value of participation is difficult to assess. Thus, abstract goals may make it more difficult for the Section to evaluate the results or outcomes of its plan.

Forecasting of future funding, membership growth, service demands, and leadership growth, was noticeably absent in the Section's planning process. These and other important variables such as changes in the provincial government's mandate, could affect the successful achievement of the Section's goals but do not seem to have been taken into account. Also missing were plans relative to fundraising or securing funds through grants or other means of sponsorship. Each projected budget simply included income based upon previous grants received, with allowance for inflation over three years. Thus, no financial growth and/or decrease was foreseen or planned for.

The Section's strategic plan serves to illustrate further the constraints that are placed on the organization by the national Association. Since the principle means for implementing plans is through policy making, and the policies of the Section are largely determined by the CFSA, the Section is limited to developing a strategic plan within those policies.

One consequence of this limitation is borne out in the Section's plan discussed here. The plan has little substance; it does not offer any new or creative ideas and tackles old problems with old solutions as mandated by the CFSA. The best example of this is in the case of officials. Plans in this regard include offering two judges clinics per zone annually and "to actively promote and encourage at the club level the participation of Senior skaters in the judging program within the Section." Measures to be taken to "promote and encourage" senior skaters are not outlined. Neither of these actions would seem to be sufficient in addressing the real problem which is "why are the number of officials declining?"

Based on the data collected for this study, it would seem that the Section needs to develop strategic plans which addresses the following problems or areas alongside the plans already in place:

1. The decreasing number of officials.
2. The inability to attract good coaches to rural parts of the province.
3. The increasing costs associated with ice rental.
4. The decreased availability of ice time for figure skating as a result of other sports and leisure activities competing for limited facility space.
5. The high cost associated with becoming an elite figure skater and the affect this has on determining who will continue in the sport.

Many of these issues have traditionally been left to the individual clubs to deal with. However, as a service organization, the Section is in a better position to gather the kind of information required to develop concrete plans of action which could be of benefit to all clubs. In short, the Section must take more of a leadership role in planning for the future of skating in Alberta.